AMERICA, AMERICA, AMERICA

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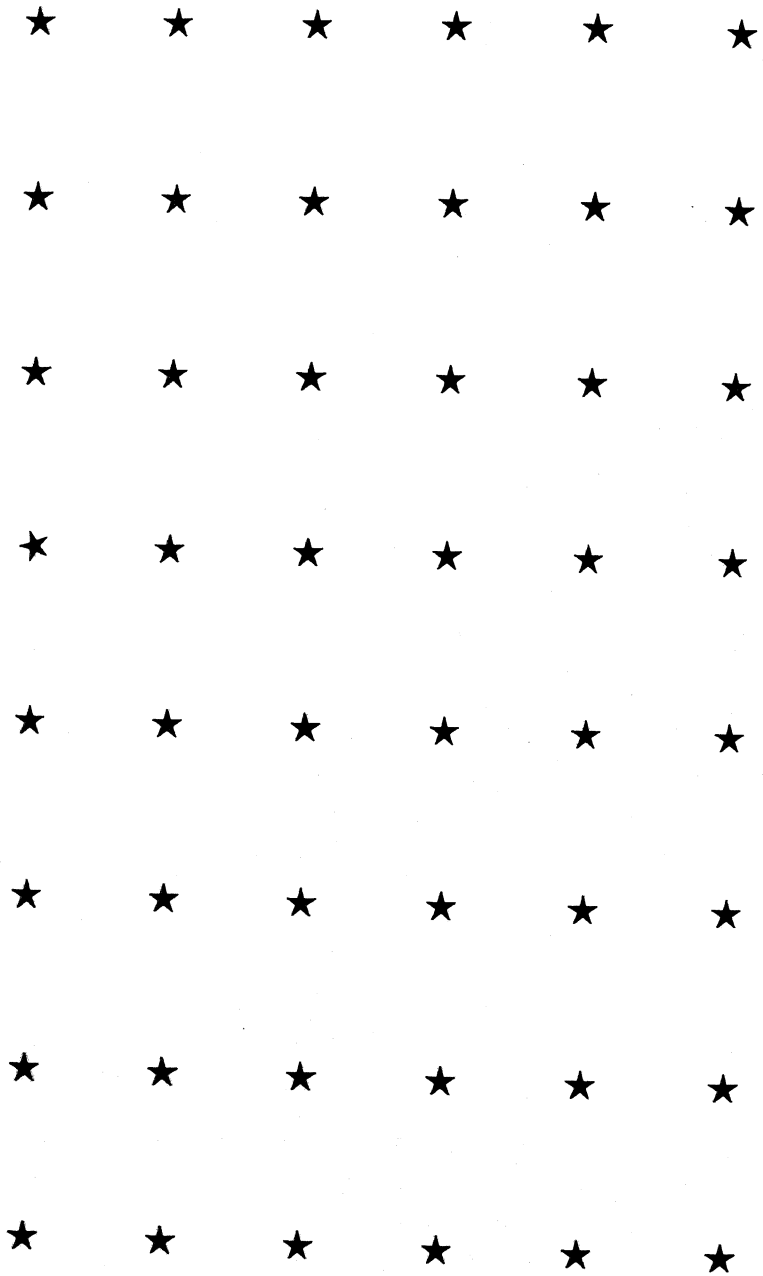

AMERICA
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Prose and Poetry about the Land, the People, and the Promise

SELECTED BY

KENNETH SEEMAN GINIGER

Franklin Watts, New York, N.Y.

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FIRST PRINTING

For my nieces and nephews

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INTRODUCTION

★

This book is called *America, America, America.* Its title is an exact one because the book contains a selection of what has been written about three Americas—America the land, America the people, and America the promise.

For America is all three of these. It is, first, a great, wide, rich, and beautiful land. Indeed, many people feel that our national anthem should be not "The Star Spangled Banner" but another song we all love, "America the Beautiful":

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain.

Second, America is its people. Not only is it George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, Thomas A. Edison and George Washington Carver, William C. Gorgas and Jonas Salk—it is all the other millions, living and dead, who have not left their names on the pages of history but who together built and are still building a great nation.

Third, and most important, America is a promise. Its rich land and its people from every corner of the globe have joined in a promise of freedom far greater than any the world has known before. Here, the meaning of the word "freedom" itself has grown wider with each generation. Where the first Americans asked only freedom to worship their God in their own ways, their sons and daughters asked also freedom to govern themselves. And we, generations later, look forward not only to these things but to freedom from want, from disease, and from a host of other problems which have plagued men since

time began. It is this freedom and this idea of freedom as a growing thing that is the promise of America.

I hope you will find in this book of the three Americas words you know and love already—and words you will learn to know and love. Perhaps reading them will lead you to read some of the other things we just couldn't find room for here. If it does, I am sure you will enjoy your personal exploration of *America, America, America* as much as I did.

KENNETH SEEMAN GINIGER

I

Pilgrims and Strangers

Steadily steering, eagerly peering,
Trusting in God, your fathers came,
Pilgrims and strangers, fronting all dangers . . .
ROBERT COLLIER (1823-1912)

★

The first Americans were indeed "pilgrims and strangers" and the land they came to was peopled with other strangers. The story of how we drove the Indians ever westward, taking their land for our own, is probably the saddest in all of American history. Today we are only beginning to pay our just debt to the first real Americans.

But what happened to the Indians is only one side of the story. The other side—the hope, faith, and courage in the face of terrible adversity demonstrated by these "pilgrims and strangers"—is something of which we may well be proud. For here was the cornerstone laid for the dream that was to become America.

★ ★ ★

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND

Philip Freneau

★

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;

The posture that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imagined birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not lie, but here they sit.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an agèd elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played!

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale Shebah with her braided hair)

And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moon, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer—a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, the pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

THE WAR GOD'S HORSE SONG

from the Navajo

Dane and Mary Coolidge

★

I am the Turquoise Woman's Son.
On top of Belted Mountain
Beautiful horses—slim like a weasel!
My horse has a hoof like striped agate;
His fetlock is like a fine eagle plume;
His legs are like quick lightning.
My horse's body is like an eagle-plumed arrow;
My horse has a tail like a trailing black cloud.
I put flexible goods on my horse's back;
The Little Holy Wind blows through his hair.

His mane is made of short rainbows.
My horse's ears are made of round corn.
My horse's eyes are made of big stars.

My horse's head is made of mixed waters
(From the holy waters—he never knows thirst).
My horse's teeth are made of white shell.
The long rainbow is in his mouth for a bridle,
And with it I guide him.
When my horse neighs, different-colored horses follow.
When my horse neighs, different-colored sheep follow.
I am wealthy because of him.
Before me peaceful,
Behind me peaceful,
All around me peaceful—
Peaceful voice when he neighs.
I am Everlasting and Peaceful.
I stand for my horse.

WARRIOR'S SONG

Translated by

Mary Austin

★

Weep not for me, Loved Woman,
Should I die;
But for yourself be weeping!

Weep not for warriors who go
Gladly to battle.
Theirs to revenge
Fallen and slain of our people;
Theirs to lay low
All our foes like them,
Death to make, singing.

Weep not for warriors,
But weep for women!
Oh, weep for women!

Theirs to be pitied
Most of all creatures,
Whose men return not!
How shall their hearts be stayed
When we are fallen?

Weep not for me, Loved Woman,
For yourself alone be weeping!

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

from *Hiawatha*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

★

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the waters,
Sound of music, words of wonder;
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees,
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.
Saw the firefly, wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:
"Wah-wah-taysee, little firefly,

Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"
Saw the moon rise from the water
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there."
Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."
Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

COLUMBUS

1492

Joaquin Miller

★

Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone.
Brave Adm'r'l, speak; what shall I say?"
"Why, say, 'Sail on! sail on! and on!' "

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Adm'r'l, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!' "

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way.
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Adm'r'l, speak and say—"
He said, "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.

He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth, as if to bite!
Brave Adm'r'l, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he kept his deck,
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
A light! A light! A light! A light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

HENRY HUDSON'S QUEST

1609

Burton Egbert Stevenson

★

Out from the harbor of Amsterdam
The Half Moon turned her prow to sea;
The coast of Norway dropped behind,
Yet Northward still kept she
Through the drifting fog and the driving snow,
Where never before man dared to go:
"O Pilot, shall we find the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"A waste of ice before us lies—we must turn back," said he.

Westward they steered their tiny bark,
Westward through weary weeks they sped,
Till the cold gray strand of a stranger-land
Loomed through the mist ahead.
League after league they hugged the coast,
And their Captain never left his post:
"O Pilot, see you yet the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"I see but the rocks and the barren shore; no strait is there,"
quoth he.

They sailed to the North—they sailed to the South—
And at last they rounded an arm of sand
Which held the sea from a harbor's mouth—
The loveliest in the land;
They kept their course across the bay,
And the shore before them fell away:
"O Pilot, see you not the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"Hold the rudder true! Praise Christ Jesu! the strait is here,"
said he.

Onward they glide with wind and tide,
Past marshes gray and crags sun-kissed;
They skirt the sills of green-clad hills,
And meadows white with mist—
But alas! the hope and the brave, brave dream!
For rock and shallow bar the stream:
"O Pilot, can this be the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"Nay, Captain, nay; 'tis not this way; turn back we must,"
said he.

Full sad was Hudson's heart as he turned
The Half Moon's prow to the South once more;
He saw no beauty in crag or hill,
No beauty in curving shore;

For they shut him away from that fabled main
He sought his whole life long,—in vain:
"O Pilot, say, can there be a strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"God's crypt is sealed! 'Twill stand revealed in His own good time," quoth he.

CHEAP LAND IN VIRGINIA

1609

Part of a letter written to attract Englishmen to the Virginia Colonies

Captain John Smith

★

Who can desire more content, that hath small means or only his own ability to improve his fortune, than to tread and plant that ground he hath purchased by the risk of his life? If he have virtue and courage, what to such a mind can be more pleasant than planting and building a foundation for his posterity, got from the rude earth by God's blessing and his own industry? What so truly suits with honor and honesty as discovering things unknown? Erecting towns, peopling countries, informing the ignorant, reforming things unjust, teaching virtue, and gaining for our native mother country a new kingdom? Then who would live at home idly, or think himself of any worth if he live only to eat, drink, and sleep, and so to die?

You fathers, that are either so foolishly fond or so negligently careless as that you maintain your children in idle wantonness till they become so basely unkind as they wish nothing but your death, can obtain for them an estate, which in a

small time, but with a little assistance from you, might be better than your own. If an angel should tell you that any place can afford such fortunes, you would not believe him, no more than Columbus was believed. But such a place is Virginia. . . .

THE WORD OF GOD TO LEYDEN CAME

1620

Jeremiah Eames Rankin

★

The word of God to Leyden came,
Dutch town by Zuyder Zee:
Rise up, my children of no name,
My kings and priests to be.
There is an empire in the West,
Which I will soon unfold;
A thousand harvests in her breast,
Rocks ribbed with iron and gold.

Rise up, my children, time is ripe!
Old things are passed away.
Bishops and kings from earth I wipe;
Too long they've had their day.
A little ship have I prepared
To bear you o'er the seas;
And in your souls, my will declared,
Shall grow by slow degrees.

Beneath my throne the martyrs cry:
I hear their voice, How long?
It mingles with their praises high,

And with their victor song.
The thing they longed and waited for,
But died without the sight;
So, this shall be! I wrong abhor,
The world I'll now set right.

Leave, then, the hammer and the loom,
You've other work to do;
For Freedom's commonwealth there's room,
And you shall build it too.
I'm tired of bishops and their pride,
I'm tired of kings as well;
Henceforth I take the people's side,
And with the people dwell.

Tear off the mitre from the priest,
And from the king, his crown;
Let all my captives be released;
Lift up, whom men cast down.
Their pastors let the people choose,
And choose their rulers too;
Whom they select, I'll not refuse,
But bless the work they do.

The Pilgrims rose, at this, God's word,
And sailed the wintry seas:
With their own flesh nor blood conferred,
Nor thought of wealth or ease.
They left the towers of Leyden town,
They left the Zuyder Zee;
And where they cast their anchor down,
Rose Freedom's realm to be.

THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT

1620

★

In the Name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, *Defender of the Faith, &c.* having undertaken for the Glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents, solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; And by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at *Cape Cod* the eleventh of November, in the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth and of Scotland, the fifty-fourth. *Anno Domini,* 1620.

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

1620

Felicia Dorothea Hemans

★

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came:
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear,—
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean-eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam,

And the rocking pines of the forest roared;
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim-band;
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow, serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Aye, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstained what there they found—
Freedom to worship God!

PILGRIM FARMERS

from *We Begin*

Helen Grace Carlisle

★

1. *The Landing*

And so we hauled our anchor and sailed the *Mayflower* into the harbor we had chosen, Plymouth. As we came in sight of our new shore, Dick Brettridge died. Before we had ever breath to choose a site for home and fireside, we had to fix

upon our graveyard. We buried him on the hill, and gave it name at once: Burial Hill.

When we had done with our burying, we transported the rest of our company that wished to see the land, to see and plan what next to do. My wife Anne came, though I bade her not, seeing how nervous and weak she was. I carried her in my arms so she would not get wet from the icy waters, and left her with some women and children staring about them at the winter bleakness. But I took my son David with me, to look about. It seemed a likely place, if ever it would get green, with the stream widening out to the sea. We went afield. I poked about a bit, smelling and sniffing.

Here and there I bent to pick up a handful of soil, to crumble it in my fingers, to feel it. It was none too rich, but it was earth. We saw trees of many sorts: oak, pine, walnut, hazel, cedar, maple, birch, and more. We found also in the woods berry bushes of many sorts: blackberry, some currants, gooseberry, and some places where strawberries would be. And many wild vines. We came to some meadows. I saw some good grazing places for cattle. And plenty of wood lying about to fence them in, and springs to water them. We came on some fruit trees also, sparse and few: plum and cherry and apple. I told David we would remember where they were. Next summer we would see what kind of fruit they bore. Even if it were nothing much, pruning and care would help. Perhaps some young ones would bear transplanting to an orchard.

I could feel a small excitement commence to bud within me, to push forth, grow big, and then to suffocate me a little. We went deeper into the woods.

"Hush!" I said to David.

We stood quite still and listened. Under foot the leaves rustled faintly with scurrying life. Overhead there wheeled a hawk soaring icy quiet on the wing. Before us, on the bare branch of a great oak, a gray squirrel stood stone still and stared at us, his eyes sharp.

I couldn't help it—I burst into laughter. The squirrel fled instantly, all tail. I laughed and laughed, and clapped David on the back, and then drew him to me and hugged him close, forgetting for the moment that a lad of fourteen is shamed before such things.

"Here's a life for us! Here's work for us! This rude earth and these our hands. David, son, can't you feel it?" I stretched out my hands full, feeling the muscles flex hard as rock as I slowly clenched my fists.

THANKSGIVING

from *Customs and Fashions in Old New England*

Alice Morse Earle

★

Thanksgiving, commonly regarded as being from its earliest beginning a distinctive New England festival, and an equally characteristic Puritan holiday, was originally neither.

The first New England Thanksgiving was not observed by either Plymouth Pilgrim or Boston Puritan. "Giving God thanks" for safe arrival and many other liberal blessings was first heard on New England shores from the lips of the Popham colonists at Monhegan, in the Thanksgiving service of the Church of England.

Days set apart for thanksgiving were known in Europe before the Reformation, and were in frequent use by Protestants afterward, especially in the Church of England, where they were a fixed custom long before they were in New England. One wonders that the Puritans, hating so fiercely the customs and set days and holy days of the Established Church, should

so quickly have appointed a Thanksgiving Day. But the first New England Thanksgiving was not a day of religious observance, it was a day of recreation. Those who fancy all Puritans, and especially all Pilgrims, to have been sour, morose, and gloomy men should read this account of the first Thanksgiving week (not day) in Plymouth. It was written on December 11, 1621, by Edward Winslow to a friend in England:

> Our harvest being gotten in our governor sent four men on fowling that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruits of our labors. They four killed as much fowl as with a little help beside served the company about a week. At which times among other recreations we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoyt with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer which they brought and bestow'd on our governor, and upon the captains and others.

As Governor Bradford specified that during that autumn "beside waterfowle there was great store of wild turkies," we can have the satisfaction of feeling sure that at that first Pilgrim Thanksgiving our forefathers and foremothers had turkeys.

Thus fared the Pilgrims better at their Thanksgiving than did their English brothers, for turkeys were far from plentiful in England at that date.

Though there were but fifty-five English to eat the Pilgrim Thanksgiving feast, there were "partakers in plenty," and the ninety sociable Indian visitors did not come empty-handed, but joined fraternally in provision for the feast, and probably also in the games.

These recreations were, without doubt, competitions in running, leaping, jumping, and perhaps stool-ball, a popular game played by both sexes, in which a ball was driven from stool to stool or wicket to wicket.

During that chilly November week in Plymouth, Priscilla Mullins and John Alden may have "recreated" themselves with this ancient form of croquet—if any recreation were possible for the four women of the colony, who, with the help of one servant and a few young girls or maidekins, had to prepare and cook food for three days for one hundred and twenty hungry men, ninety-one of them being Indians, with an unbounded capacity for gluttonous gorging unsurpassed by any other race. Doubtless the deer, and possibly the great turkeys, were roasted in the open air. The picture of that Thanksgiving Day, the block-house with its few cannon, the Pilgrim men in buff breeches, red waistcoats, and green or sad-colored mandillions; the great company of Indians, gay in holiday paint and feathers and furs; the few sad, overworked, homesick women, in worn and simple gowns, with plain coifs and kerchiefs, and the pathetic handful of little children, forms a keen contrast to the prosperous, cheerful Thanksgivings of a century later.

There is no record of any special religious service during this week of feasting. The Pilgrims had good courage, staunch faith, to thus celebrate and give thanks, for they apparently had but little cause to rejoice. They had been lost in the woods, where they had wandered footsore, and been terrified by the roar of "Lyons," and had met wolves that "sat on thier tayles and grinned" at them; they had been half frozen in their poorly built houses; had been famished, or sickened with unwonted and unpalatable food; their common house had burned down, half their company was dead—they had borne sore sorrows, and equal trials were to come. They were in dire distress for the next two years. In the spring of 1623 a drought scorched the corn and stunted the beans, and in July a fast day of nine hours of prayer was followed by a rain that revived their "withered corn and their drooping affections." In testimony of their gratitude for the rain, which would not have been vouchsafed for private prayer, and think-

ing they would "show great ingratitude if they smothered up the same," the second Pilgrim Thanksgiving was ordered and observed.

In 1630, on February 22d, the first public thanksgiving was held in Boston by the Bay Colony, in gratitude for the safe arrival of food-bearing and friend-bringing ships. On November 4, 1631, Winthrop wrote again: "We kept thanksgiving day in Boston." From that time till 1684 there were at least twenty-two public thanksgiving days appointed in Massachusetts—about one in two years; but it was not a regular biennial festival. In 1675, a time of deep gloom through the many and widely separated attacks from the fierce savages, there was no public thanksgiving celebrated in either Massachusetts or Connecticut. It is difficult to state when the feast became a fixed annual observance in New England. In the year 1742 there were two Thanksgiving Days.

The early Thanksgivings were not always set upon Thursday. It is said that that day was chosen on account of its reflected glory as lecture day. Judge Sewall told the governor and his council, in 1697, that he "desir'd the same day of the week might be for Thanksgiving and Fasts," and that "Boston and Ipswich Lectures led us to Thorsday." The feast of thanks was for many years appointed with equal frequency upon "Tusday com seuen-night," or "vppon Wensday com fort-nit." Nor was any special season of the year chosen: in 1716 it was appointed in August; in 1713, in January; in 1718, in December; in 1719, in October. The frequent appointments in gratitude for bountiful harvests finally made the autumn the customary time.

THE MARYLAND TOLERATION ACT

April, 1649

This was actually the cornerstone of religious freedom in the United States

★

. . . And whereas the enforceing of the conscience in matters of religion hath frequently fallen out to be of dangerous consequence in those commonwealths where it hath been practiced, . . .

Be it therefore . . . enacted . . . that no person or persons whatsoever within this province, or the islands, ports, harbors, creeks, or havens thereunto belonging professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth be any ways troubled, molested or discountenanced for or in respect of his or her religion nor in the free exercise thereof within this province or the islands thereunto belonging nor any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion against his or her consent. . . .

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIBERTY AND LICENSE

1655

Roger Williams

★

. . . There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes, that both papists and protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges —that none of the papists, protestants, Jews, or Turks, be

forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any. I further add, that I never denied, that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course, and also command that justice, peace, and sobriety, be kept and practiced, both among the seamen and all the passengers. If any of the seamen refuse to perform their services, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help . . . towards the common charges or defense; if any refuse to obey the common law and orders of the ship; . . . the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and punish these transgressors according to their deserts and merits.

A BETRAYAL

Chief of the Mingo Indians, to
Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia

1774

Logan

★

I appeal to any white man to say, if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed as they passed, and said, "Logan is the friend of white men." I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man, Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood, and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children.

There runs not a drop of my blood in any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it: I have killed many: I have fully glutted my vengeance: for my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But I do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one.

INJUN SUMMER

John T. McCutcheon

★

Yep, sonny, this is sure enough Injun summer. Don't know what that is, I reckon, do you?

Well, that's when all the homesick Injuns come back to play. You know, a long time ago, long afore yer granddaddy was born even, there used to be heaps of Injuns around here—thousands—millions, I reckon, far as that's concerned. Reg'lar sure 'nough Injuns—none o' yer cigar store Injuns, not much. They wuz all around here—right here where you're standin'.

Don't be skeered—hain't none around here now, leastways no live ones. They been gone this many a year.

They all went away and died, so they ain't no more left.

But every year, 'long about now, they all come back, leastways their spirits do. They're here now. You can see 'em off across the fields. Look real hard. See that kind o' hazy, misty look out yonder? Well, them's Injuns—Injun spirits marchin' along and dancin' in the sunlight. That's what makes that kind o'haze that's everywhere—it's jest the spirits of the Injuns all come back. They're all around us now.

See off yonder; see them tepees? They kind o' look like corn shocks from here, but them's Injun tents, sure as you're a foot

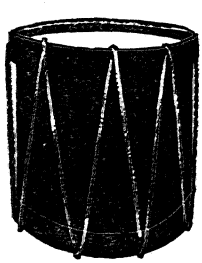
high. See 'em now? Sure, I knowed you could. Smell that smoky sort o' smell in the air? That's the campfires a-burnin' and their pipes a-goin'.

Lots o' people say it's jest leaves burnin', but it ain't. It's the campfires, an' th' Injuns are hoppin' 'round 'em t' beat the old Harry.

You jest come out here tonight when the moon is hangin' over the hill off yonder an' the harvest fields is all swimmin' in the moonlight, an' you can see the Injuns and the tepees jest as plain as kin be. You can, eh? I knowed you would after a little while.

Did you notice how the leaves turn red 'bout this time o' year? That's jest another sign o' redskins. That's when an old Injun spirit gits tired dancin' an' goes up and squats on a leaf t' rest. Why, I kin hear 'em rustlin' an' whisperin' an' creepin' 'round among the leaves all the time; an' ever' once'n a while a leaf gives way under some fat old Injun ghost and comes floatin' down to the ground. See—here's one now. See how red it is? That's the war paint rubbed off'n an Injun ghost, sure's you're born.

Purty soon all the Injuns'll go marchin' away again, back to the happy huntin' grounds, but next year you'll see 'em all troopin' back—th' sky jest hazy with 'em and their campfires smolderin' away jest like they are now.



II

Times That Tried Men's Souls

All the achings and the quaking of "the times that tried men's souls."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-1894)

★

James G. Blaine, who was defeated for the presidency of the United States by Grover Cleveland in 1884, once said, "The United States is the only country with a known birthday. All the rest began, they know not when, and grew into power, they know not how. If there had been no Independence Day, England and America combined would not be so great as each actually is. There is no Republican, no Democrat, on the Fourth of July—all are Americans. All feel that their country is greater than party."

Although it is not true that the United States is the only country with a birthday—most of our neighbors to the south have birthdays too—it is true that the American Revolution marked the beginning of our country's greatness. The selections that follow tell that story.

★ ★ ★

THE EVILS OF SUBMISSION TO HIGHER POWERS

1750

Jonathan Mayhew

★

If we calmly consider the nature of the thing itself, nothing can well be imagined more directly contrary to common sense than to suppose that millions of people should be subjected to the arbitrary, precarious pleasure of one single man . . . so that their estates, and everything that is calculable in life, and even their lives also should be absolutely at his disposal if he happens to be wanton and capricious enough to demand them. What unprejudiced man can think that God made all to be thus subservient to the lawless pleasure and frenzy of one, so that it shall always be a sin to resist him!

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

from *The Letters of John Andrews, Esq.*

John Andrews

★

December 18th [1773]

However precarious our situation may be, yet such is the present calm composure of the people that a stranger would hardly think that ten thousand pounds sterling of the East India Company's tea was destroy'd the night, or rather evening

before last, yet it is a serious truth; and if yours, together with the other Southern provinces, should rest satisfied with their quota being stor'd, poor Boston will feel the whole weight of ministerial vengeance. However, it is the opinion of most people that we stand an equal chance now, whether troops are sent in consequence of it or not; whereas, had it been stor'd, we should inevitably have had 'em, to enforce the sale of it. —The affair was transacted with the greatest regularity and despatch. Mr. Rotch finding he exposed himself not only to the loss of his ship but for the value of the tea in case he sent her back with it, *without a clearance from the custom house,* as the Admiral kept a ship in readiness to make a seizure of it whenever it should sail under those circumstances; therefore declin'd complying with his former promises, and absolutely declar'd his vessel should not carry it, without a proper clearance could be procur'd or he to be indemnified for the value of her:—when a general muster was assembled, from this and all the neighboring towns, to the number of five or six thousand, at 10 o'clock Thursday morning in the Old South Meeting house, where they pass'd a unanimous vote that the Tea should go out of the harbor that afternoon, and sent a committee with Mr. Rotch to the Custom house to demand a clearance, which the collector told 'em was not in his power to give, without the duties being first paid. They then sent Mr. Rotch to Milton, to ask a pass from the Governor, who sent for answer, that "consistent with the rules of government and his duty to the King he could not grant one without they produc'd a previous clearance from the office."—By the time he return'd with this message the candles were light in the house, and upon reading it, such prodigious shouts were made, that induc'd me, while drinking tea at home, to go out and know the cause of it. The house was so crowded I could get no farther than the porch, when I found the moderator was just declaring the meeting to be dissolv'd, which caused another general shout, out doors and in, and three cheers. What

with that, and the consequent noise of breaking up the meeting, you'd thought that the inhabitants of the infernal regions had broke loose. For my part, I went contentedly home and finish'd my tea, but was soon inform'd what was going forward: but still not crediting it without ocular demonstration, I went and was satisfied. They muster'd, I'm told, upon Fort Hill, to the number of about two hundred, and proceeded, two by two, to Griffin's wharf, where Hall, Bruce, and Coffin lay, each with 114 chest of the ill fated article on board; the two former with only that article, but the latter arriv'd at the wharf only the day before, was freighted with a large quantity of other goods, which they took the greatest care not to injure in the least, and before nine o'clock in the evening, every chest from on board the three vessels was knock'd to pieces and flung over the sides. They say the actors were Indians from Narragansett. Whether they were or not, to a transient observer they appear'd as such, being cloth'd in Blankets with the heads muffled, and copper color'd countenances, being each arm'd with a hatchet or axe, and pair pistols, nor was their dialect different from what I conceived these geniusses to speak, as their jargon was unintelligible to all but themselves. Not the least insult was offer'd to any person, save one Captain Conner, a renter of horses in this place, not many years since remov'd from dear Ireland, who had ripped up the lining of his coat and waistcoat under the arms, and watching his opportunity had nearly fill'd 'em with tea, but being detected, was handled pretty roughly. They not only stripp'd him of his clothes, but gave him a coat of mud, with a severe bruising into the bargain; and nothing but their utter aversion to make *any* disturbance prevented his being tar'd and feather'd.

Should not have troubled you with this, by this Post, hadn't I thought you would be glad of a more particular account of so important a transaction, than you could have obtain'd by common report; and if it affords my brother but a temporary

amusement, I shall be more than repaid for the trouble of writing.

AMERICA'S DUTY TO RESIST

from his speech to the Virginia legislators urging armed resistance to British policy, 1775

Patrick Henry

★

It is natural for man to indulge in the illusion of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? . . . For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth—to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging the future but by the past. . . . If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, . . . we must fight! . . . An appeal to arms, and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us.

The battle, Sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. . . . There is no retreat but in submission and slavery. Our chains are forged—their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston. The war is inevitable; and let it come! . . .

Gentlemen may cry peace! peace! but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is

life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

1775

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

★

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar

Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent

On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,

Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed.
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,

Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

A CALL TO ARMS

from *The Crisis,* 1776

Thomas Paine

★

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now,* deserves the love and thanks of men and women. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. . . . It is the object only of war that makes it honorable. And if there was ever a just war since the world began, it is this in which America is now engaged. . . . We fight not to

enslave, but to set a country free, and to make room upon the earth for honest men to live in.

THE CONCORD HYMN

Ralph Waldo Emerson

★

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their dead redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those spirits dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

SIGNING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

1776

from *John Adams and the American Revolution*

Catherine Drinker Bowen

★

Thomas Jefferson, sitting next to Dr. Franklin in Congress, shifted his position for the fifth time in as many minutes. It was the morning of July the fourth, and the delegates in Committee of the Whole were discussing the Declaration. They had been at it since late afternoon of July second, when the vote on independence was announced.

The process was quite obviously painful to the author. From time to time, Franklin glanced at him quizzically. The thing was not going at all as Jefferson had expected. It was in the Preamble that he—and John Adams too—had looked for most trouble. The Preamble contained extremely dangerous doctrines: *All men are created equal* was a hard morsel for patrician landholders to swallow. But somehow, Congress let it through, and with it the statement that men are endowed by their Creator with the right to *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

Life, liberty, and property was the old revolutionary slogan. For denying it, Tories had lost their lives. *Property* was included even in the very radical Virginia Declaration of Rights, published in Philadelphia newspapers less than a month ago. Jefferson preferred his own phrase, "the pursuit of happiness."

It was when Harrison reached the indictments against the King that Jefferson began truly to suffer. He had composed twenty separate clauses, twenty fierce "reasons" to let the

world know that America was justified in what she did. Battering their way through all twenty, Congress cut and slashed, deleted, contracted, changed words and phrases—and then took out, entire, Jefferson's most cherished outburst against the slave trade. (*This assemblage of horrors,* Jefferson had called it; *this market where men are bought and sold.*)

Congress, plainly, saw no reason to lay on George Rex the blame for this deplorable but traditional trade. Had General Washington's slaves, John Hancock's slaves, been imported by order of George III? What about the late very lucrative Rhode Island traffic? New England's hands were far from clean. South Carolina and Georgia, moreover, were still importing slaves from Africa. . . . They made it instantly clear they had no slightest intention of letting Clause 20 go through.

John Adams darted to his feet, shouting angrily at Rutledge —something about freedom being a mere masquerade in a country that sold human beings in chains. John talked (Jefferson noted gratefully) much louder than the opposition— "fighting fearlessly for every word," Jefferson testified later. John banged with his hickory cane against the floor—and got, in the end, absolutely nowhere.

Calmly, with infinite and ruthless good sense, Congress drew the sting from Jefferson's expressed and ferocious desire for "eternal separation" from the British people as well as the British King. Why, said Congress, close the door on a people of whom a large proportion had shown great sympathy for the American cause? In the end, Harrison crossed out the word "eternal," crossed out indeed a whole page of angry accusation. America, he wrote above the lined-out sentence, would hold the British people, as she held the rest of mankind, *enemies in war, in peace friends.*

On the table before him, Harrison had one of Jefferson's copies of the Declaration. Above it the official pen hung poised as Harrison began to read aloud in a singsong, monotonous, well-bred voice. Jefferson sat near the front; his clear,

steady gaze was fixed with awful intentness on the manuscript. His author's imagination reproduced each paragraph, each page with its horrid changes and interlineation:

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for *one* *dissolve the political bonds which have connected them* ~~a~~ people to ~~advance from that subordination in which they have~~ *with another, and to* ~~hitherto remained, & to~~ assume among the powers of the earth the equal and independent station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel *the separation* them to the change.

We hold these truths to be *self-evident* ~~sacred and undeniable~~ .

That last change was Dr. Franklin's. Grudgingly, Jefferson confessed to himself that one word, even hyphenated, was better than three.

Congress, in point of fact, improved the document by every single alteration. Moreover they shortened rather than expanded it, a feat seldom if ever achieved by parliamentary critics. In the end, however, it was still Jefferson's composition; no one could doubt it. His pen had written it, his spirit brooded over it, giving light to the whole. . . . Now he sat listening as Harrison's voice droned on. This was the final reading. When it was over, the Declaration would be voted on in full Congress. There was no question of signing the document today; this mutilated copy was not fit for formal signature. It must be properly printed, "engrossed on parchment." Congress moreover possessed no official seal or stamp to honor such a document; for a hundred years the colonies had used only the King's great seal. A stamp must be invented, and quickly.

We therefore (read Harrison), *the Representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled . . . do solemnly* PUBLISH *and* DECLARE, *That these United Colonies are and of right ought to be,* FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES . . . *with* FULL POWER *to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which* INDEPENDENT STATES *may of right do.*

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honour.

In the State House Yard there stood a round scaffold about twenty feet high, with a little railed platform on top. From this "awful stage," as John called it, the Declaration was first proclaimed on Monday, July eighth, at noontime. Colonel Nixon of the Philadelphia Troops, drawn up in formation, saluted, the people gave three great huzzas. Forty-nine members of Congress, standing just below the platform, cheered too, then filed through the State House door and went back to work.

It was not a big celebration nor a loud one. Pennsylvania had made more noise, rung more bells and lighted more bonfires when she held her first Provincial Congress. But there was no question that people felt deeply the significance of the Declaration. As the days passed and post riders carried it north and south, the country everywhere responded. In towns and hamlets men gathered cheering as the Declaration was read from Meeting-house steps, then ran to tear down the King's Arms from their courthouse doors. The Lion and the Unicorn would prance no more in these American States.

American States . . . People tried the phrase, turning it over on their tongue . . . *God bless the American States!* . . .

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

1776

★

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that government long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of gov-

ernment. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. . . .

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind—enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved, and that, as free and independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration,

with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

RESOLUTION

OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

ON THE UNITED STATES FLAG

1777

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That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.

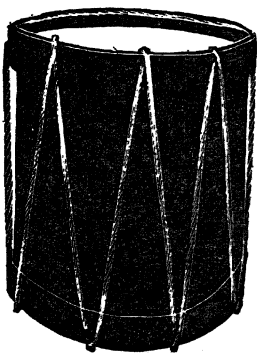
PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE UNITED STATES

1787

★

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.



FIRST TEN AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Bill of Rights

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Article I

CONGRESS shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Article II

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Article III

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Article IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Article V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital or other infamous crime unless on a presentment or indictment of a

Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service, in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

Article VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which districts shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Article VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States than according to the rules of the common law.

Article VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Article IX

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Article X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA

from a letter to George Washington, 1780

Benjamin Franklin

★

I must soon quit the scene, but you may live to see our country flourish; as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over; like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak state, by a sudden gust of violent wind, hail, and rain, seemed to be threatened with absolute destruction; yet the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigor, and delights the eye not of its owner only, but of every observing traveler.

VIRGINIA STATUTE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

1786

★

. . . *Be it enacted by the General Assembly,* That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, re-

strained, molested, or burdened in his body or his goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion; and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities . . .

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

from his Farewell Address, 1796

George Washington

★

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. . . .

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

Thomas Jefferson

★

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion by education.

SELF GOVERNMENT

from his first inaugural address, 1801

Thomas Jefferson

★

Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE

1823

★

. . . In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparations for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are of necessity more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective governments; and to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United

States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

THE GRAY CHAMPION

Nathaniel Hawthorne

★

There was once a time when New England groaned under the actual pressure of heavier wrongs than those threatened ones which later brought on the Revolution. James II, the bigoted successor of Charles the Voluptuous, had annulled the charters of all the colonies and sent a harsh and unprincipled soldier to take away our liberties and endanger our religion. The administration of Sir Edmund Andros lacked scarcely a single characteristic of tyranny: a governor and council, holding office from the king and wholly independent of the country; laws made and taxes levied without concurrence of the people, immediate or by their representatives; the rights of private citizens violated and the titles of all landed property declared void; the voice of complaint stifled by restrictions on the press; and, finally, disaffection overawed by

the first band of mercenary troops that ever marched on our free soil. For two years our ancestors were kept in sullen submission by that filial love which had invariably secured their allegiance to the mother country. Till these evil times, however, such allegiance had been merely nominal, and the colonists had ruled themselves, enjoying far more freedom than is even yet the privilege of the native subjects of Great Britain.

At length, a rumor reached our shores that the Prince of Orange had ventured on an enterprise the success of which would be the triumph of civil and religious rights and the salvation of New England. It was but a doubtful whisper; it might be false or the attempt might fail; and, in either case, the man that stirred against King James would lose his head. Still, the intelligence produced a marked effect. The people smiled mysteriously in the streets and threw bold glances at their oppressors; while far and wide there was a subdued and silent agitation, as if the slightest signal would rouse the whole land from its sluggish despondency. Aware of their danger, the rulers resolved to avert it by an imposing display of strength, and perhaps to confirm their despotism by yet harsher measures. One afternoon in April, 1689, Sir Edmund Andros and his favorite councilors, being warm with wine, assembled the redcoats of the governor's guard and made their appearance in the streets of Boston. The sun was near setting when the march commenced.

The roll of the drum at that unquiet crisis seemed to go through the streets, less as the martial music of the soldiers than as a muster-call to the inhabitants themselves. A multitude by various avenues assembled in King Street, which was destined to be the scene nearly a century afterward of another encounter between the troops of Britain and a people struggling against her tyranny.

Though more than sixty years had elapsed since the pilgrims came, this crowd of their descendants still showed the

strong and somber features of their character, perhaps more strikingly in such a stern emergency than on happier occasions. There were the sober garb, the general severity of mien, the gloomy but undismayed expression, the scriptural forms of speech, and the confidence in Heaven's blessing on a righteous cause, which would have marked a band of the original Puritans when threatened by some peril of the wilderness. Indeed, it was not yet time for the old spirit to be extinct, since there were men in the streets that day who had worshipped there beneath the trees, before a house was reared to the God for whom they had become exiles. Old soldiers of the Parliament were here, too, smiling grimly at the thought that their aged arms might strike another blow against the house of Stuart. Here, also, were the veterans of King Phillip's War, who had burned villages and slaughtered young and old with pious fierceness, while the godly souls throughout the land were helping them with prayer. Several ministers were scattered among the crowd, which, unlike all other mobs, regarded them with such reverence as if there were sanctity in their very garments. These holy men exerted their influence to quiet the people but not to disperse them.

Meantime, the purpose of the governor, in disturbing the peace of the town at a period when the slightest commotion might throw the country into a ferment, was almost the universal subject of inquiry, and variously explained.

"Satan will strike his master stroke presently," cried some, "because he knoweth that his time is short. All our godly pastors are to be dragged to prison! We shall see them at a Smithfield fire in King Street!"

Hereupon the people of each parish gathered closer round their minister, who looked calmly upward and assumed a more apostolic dignity, as well befitted a candidate for the highest honor of his profession, the crown of martyrdom.

The governor under the old charter, Bradstreet, a venerable companion of the first settlers, was known to be in town.

There were grounds for conjecturing that Sir Edmund Andros intended at once to strike terror by a parade of military force, and to confound the opposite faction by possessing himself of their chief.

"Stand firm for the old charter, Governor!" shouted the crowd, seizing upon the idea. "The good old Governor Bradstreet!"

While this cry was at the loudest, the people were surprised by the well-known figure of Governor Bradstreet himself, a patriarch of nearly ninety, who appeared on the elevated steps of a door and, with characteristic mildness, besought them to submit to the constituted authorities.

"My children," concluded this venerable person, "do nothing rashly. Cry not aloud, but pray for the welfare of New England, and await patiently what the Lord will do in this matter!"

The event was soon to be decided. All this time the roll of the drum had been approaching through Cornhill Street louder and deeper, till, with reverberations from house to house, and the regular tramp of martial footsteps, it burst into the street. A double rank of soldiers made their appearance, occupying the whole breadth of the passage with shouldered matchlocks and matches burning, so as to present a row of fires in the dusk. Their steady march was like the progress of a machine that would roll irresistibly over everything in its way. Next, moving slowly, with a confused clatter of hoofs on the pavement, rode a party of mounted gentlemen, the central figure being Sir Edmund Andros, elderly, but erect and soldierlike. Those around him were his favorite councilors and the bitterest foes of New England.

The captain of a frigate in the harbor and two or three civil officers under the Crown were also there. But the figure which most attracted the public eye and stirred up the deepest feeling was the Episcopal clergyman of King's Chapel, riding haughtily among the magistrates in his priestly vestments, the

fitting representative of the union of church and state, and all those abominations which had driven the Puritans to the wilderness. Another guard of soldiers, in double rank, brought up the rear.

The whole scene was a picture of the condition of New England; and its moral: the deformity of any government that does not grow out of the nature of things and the character of the people. On one side the religious multitude with their sad visages and dark attire and, on the other, the group of despotic rulers, with the high churchman in the midst, and here and there a crucifix at their bosoms, all magnificently clad, flushed with wine, proud of unjust authority, and scoffing at the universal groan. And the mercenary soldiers, waiting but the word to deluge the street with blood, showed the only means by which obedience could be secured.

"O Lord of Hosts," cried a voice among the crowd, "provide a champion for thy people!"

This ejaculation was loudly uttered and served as a herald's cry to introduce a remarkable personage. The crowd had rolled back and were now huddled together nearly at the extremity of the street, while the soldiers had advanced no more than a third of its length. The intervening space was empty—a paved solitude between lofty edifices which threw almost a twilight shadow over it. Suddenly, there was seen the figure of an ancient man who seemed to have emerged from among the people and was walking by himself along the center of the street to confront the armed band. He wore the old Puritan dress, a dark cloak and a steeple-crowned hat, in the fashion of at least fifty years before, with a heavy sword upon his thigh, but a staff in his hand to assist the tremulous gait of age.

When at some distance from the multitude, the old man turned slowly round, displaying a face of antique majesty, rendered doubly venerable by the hoary beard that descended

on his breast. He made a gesture at once of encouragement and warning, then turned again, and resumed his way.

"Who is this gray patriarch?" asked the young men of their sires.

"Who is this venerable brother?" asked the old men among themselves.

But none could make reply. The fathers of the people, those of fourscore years and upward, were disturbed, deeming it strange that they should forget one of such evident authority whom they must have known in their early days, the associate of Winthrop and all the old councilors, giving laws and making prayers and leading them against the savage. The elderly men ought to have remembered him, too, with locks as gray in their youth as their own were now. And the young! How could he have passed so utterly from their memories—that hoary sire, the relic of long-departed times, whose awful benediction had surely been bestowed on their uncovered heads in childhood?

Meanwhile, the venerable stranger, staff in hand, was pursuing his solitary walk along the center of the street. As he drew near the advancing soldiers, and as the roll of their drum came full upon his ear, the old man raised himself to a loftier bearing, while the decrepitude of age seemed to fall from his shoulders, leaving him in gray but unbroken dignity. Now, he marched onward with a warrior's step, keeping time to the military music. Thus, the aged form advanced on one side, and the whole parade of soldiers and magistrates on the other, till, when scarcely twenty yards remained between, the old man grasped his staff by the middle, and held it before him like a leader's truncheon.

"Stand!" cried he.

The eye, the face, and attitude of command; the solemn, yet warlike peal of that voice, fit either to rule a host in the battlefield or be raised to God in prayer, were irresistible. At the old man's word and outstretched arm, the roll of the

drum was hushed at once, and the advancing line stood still. A tremulous enthusiasm seized upon the multitude. That stately form, combining the leader and the saint, so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb, could only belong to some old champion of the righteous cause, whom the oppressor's drum had summoned from his grave. They raised a shout of awe and exultation, and looked for the deliverance of New England.

The governor, and the gentlemen of his party, perceiving themselves brought to an unexpected stand, rode hastily forward, as if they would have pressed their snorting and affrighted horses right against the hoary apparition. He, however, blenched not a step, but glancing his severe eye round the group which half-encompassed him, at last bent it sternly on Sir Edmund Andros. One would have thought that the dark old man was chief ruler there, and that the governor and council with soldiers at their back representing the whole power and authority of the Crown had no alternative but obedience.

"What does this old fellow here?" cried Edward Randolph, fiercely. "On, Sir Edmund! Bid the soldiers forward and give the dotard the same choice that you give all his countrymen —to stand aside or be trampled on!"

"Nay, nay, let us show respect to the good grandsire," said Bullivant, laughing. "See you not, he is some old round-headed dignitary who hath lain asleep these thirty years and knows nothing of the change of times?"

"Are you mad, old man?" demanded Sir Edmund Andros in loud and harsh tones. "How dare you stay the march of King James's governor?"

"I have stayed the march of a king himself, ere now," replied the gray figure, with stern composure. "I am here, Sir Governor, because the cry of an oppressed people hath disturbed me in my secret place; and beseeching this favor earnestly of the Lord, it was vouchsafed me to appear once

again on earth in the good old cause of his saints. And what speak ye of James? There is no longer a tyrant on the throne of England, and by tomorrow noon his name shall be a by-word in this very street where ye would make it a word of terror. Back, thou that wast a governor, back! With this night thy power is ended—tomorrow, the prison!—back, lest I foretell the scaffold!"

The people had been drawing nearer and nearer and drinking in the words of their champion, who spoke in accents long disused, like one unaccustomed to converse except with the dead of many years ago. But his voice stirred their souls. They confronted the soldiers, not wholly without arms, and ready to convert the very stones of the street into deadly weapons. Sir Edmund Andros looked at the old man; then he cast his hard and cruel eye over the multitude and beheld them burning with that lurid wrath so difficult to kindle or to quench; and again he fixed his gaze on the aged form which stood obscurely in an open space, where neither friend nor foe had thrust himself. What were his thoughts?—he uttered no word which might discover.

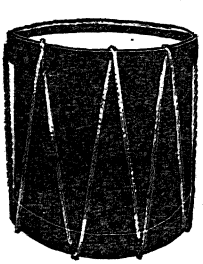
But whether the oppressor were overawed by the Gray Champion's look, or perceived his peril in the threatening attitude of the people, it is certain that he gave back, and ordered his soldiers to commence a slow and guarded retreat. Before another sunset, the governor and all that rode so proudly with him were prisoners and, long ere it was known that James had abdicated, King William was proclaimed throughout New England.

But where was the Gray Champion? Some reported that, when the troops had gone from King Street, and the people were thronging tumultuously in their rear, Bradstreet, the aged governor, was seen to embrace a form more aged than his own. Others soberly affirmed that, while they marvelled at the venerable grandeur of his aspect, the old man had faded from their eyes, melting slowly into the hues of twilight till,

where he stood, there was an empty space. But all agreed that the hoary shape was gone. The men of that generation watched for his reappearance in sunshine and in twilight, but never saw him more, nor knew when his funeral passed, nor where his gravestone was.

And who was the Gray Champion? Perhaps his name might be found in the records of that stern Court of Justice, which passed a sentence too mighty for the age, but glorious in all aftertimes for its humbling lesson to the monarch and its high example to the subject. I have heard that, whenever the descendants of the Puritans are to show the spirit of their sires, the old man appears again. When eighty years had passed, he walked once more in King Street. Five years later, in the twilight of an April morning, he stood on the green beside the meetinghouse at Lexington, where now the obelisk of granite, with a slab of slate inlaid, commemorates the first fallen of the Revolution. And when our fathers were toiling at the breastwork on Bunker Hill, all through that night the old warrior walked his rounds.

Long, long, may it be ere he comes again! His hour is one of darkness and adversity and peril. But should domestic tyranny oppress us, or the invader's step pollute our soil, still may the Gray Champion come, for he is the type of New England's hereditary spirit; and his shadowy march on the eve of danger must ever be the pledge that New England's sons will vindicate their ancestry.



III

A Dream of the West

The American dream has been a dream of the west, of the world farther on.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH (1892-)

★

The land opened before the American people, who pressed against each new frontier and flowed over it. There were mountains to climb—they climbed them. There were endless miles of plain and desert to travel—they traveled them.

These were the pioneers who carried the American dream and the promise across the Alleghenies, the Mississippi, the Great Plains, the Rockies, the high Sierras, to the Pacific.

North, south, and west they went, but if it was north, it was north-by-west, and if it was south, it was south-by-west. Some people think that something died in our people when we reached the Pacific Ocean and the only west that remained was water. But that is not so. There are other frontiers now—frontiers of science, of industry, of faith, even, and Americans are pressing against them and flowing over them. Americans will always find new frontiers.

THE VISION

from *The Trees*

Conrad Richter

★

They moved along in the bobbing, springy gait of a family that followed the woods as some families follow the sea. In the midday twilight of the forest, the father's shaggy gray figure looked hump-backed, but the hump was a pack. In that pack under his rifle were a frow and augur, bar lead and powder, blacksmith's traps and a bag of Indian meal wrapped up in a pair of yellow yarn blankets.

Sayward carried the big kettle and little kettle packed with small fixings, Genny the quilts thonged to her white shoulders and Achsa a quarter of venison with the bloody folded buckskin her father had taken since the last trader. Even the littliest ones, Wyitt and Sulie, had their burdens of axe, bullet mould and clothes. Only their mother, Jary Luckett, went light, for she was poorly with the slow fever and could lug no more than the old blue Revolutionary greatcoat with the mended slit in the right shoulder.

It was the game that had fetched the Lucketts out of Pennsylvania. Months before the chestnut burrs had begun to sharpen, Worth Luckett looked for a woods famine. It would be like nothing since the second winter after Yorktown, he claimed. He spent so much time in the woods with nobody to talk to but Sarge, his old hound, that when he opened his mouth Jary had learned to pick up her ears and listen. For a month he had been noticing sign. The oaks, beeches and hazel patches would have slim mast for bears and pigeons this year. Deer paths lay barer than any time he could recollect of fresh droppings. And now the squirrels were leaving the country.

He claimed he had stood on a log near the old Mingo

hemlock and seen them pouring like a mill race through the woods. . . . The very floor of the forest was gray and black with them. When they came to Paddy's Run, they didn't wait to take up and over the trees but plunged in like beaver. And the live ones fought over the drowned ones' bodies.

If meat on the go wasn't likely to be tainted, Worth could have caught himself a club and laid out a hundred without the waste of a dram of powder. As it was, he just stood on his log like a duck in thunder, waiting to see if the old Harry himself was not on the tail end. And when the last came, there was nothing behind them; nothing, he allowed, but famine.

The Luckett young ones stood listening to the tale with open mouths. The homespun over their hearts plopped in and out like the flanks of those runaway squirrels. They would have given the last stitch off their backs to have seen it. They wanted to go up West anyhow, and now they couldn't wait till tomorrow. But they daren't show it in front of their father. No, they just stood there gaping and dying to hear what their mother would have to say.

Jary sat quiet on her homemade hickory rocker. Oh, she knew how bad Worth wanted an excuse to get away from here. Her eyes slanted down toward the clay floor. Her mouth rounded a bit as if she took all these things, good, bad and indifferent, and was running them quietly around inside her lips. Her mouth was so gentle and yet could shut like a mussel shell. She looked up and there was no telling what lay in her mind.

"You're aimin' to cross the Ohio?" she asked, and her eyes glinted a moment dangerously at her man.

He gave a nod. . . .

Now they had crossed the Ohio on a pole ferry and the mud on their feet was no longer the familiar red and brown earth of Pennsylvania. It was black like dung. The young ones were wild over tramping the same trace their father had

tramped as a boy with Colonel Boquet. Here was where the army sheep had to be shut in for the night and here where the soldiers had axed the trace wider to let the army train through. It was a country of hills and Jary had said she could breathe again like on those mortal sweet hills of Pennsylvania. Now that those hills were so far behind her, it was easier to give them up. Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad out here like she thought. What was the use of living in the same state as your folks if you never saw them anyhow?

They rounded a high ridge. A devil's race-course cleared the air of limbs below. Here was something Worth had not told them about.

For a moment Sayward reckoned that her father had fetched them unbeknownst to the Western ocean and what lay beneath was the late sun glittering on green-black water. Then she saw that what they looked down on was a dark, illimitable expanse of wilderness. It was a sea of solid tree-tops broken only by some gash where deep beneath the foliage an unknown stream made its way. As far as the eye could reach, this lonely forest sea rolled on and on till its faint blue billows broke against an incredibly distant horizon.

They had all stopped with a common notion and stood looking out. Sayward saw her mother's eyes search with the hope of finding some settlement or leastwise a settler's clearing. But over that vast solitude no wisp of smoke arose. Though they waited here till night, the girl knew that no light of human habitation would appear except the solitary red spark of some Delaware or Shawnee campfire. Already the lowering sun slanted melancholy rays over the scene, and as it sank, the shadows of those far hills reached out with long fingers.

It was a picture Sayward was to carry to her grave, although she didn't know it then. In later years when it was all to go so that her own father wouldn't know the place if he rose from his bury hole, she was to call the scene to mind. This is the

way it was, she would say to herself. Nowhere else but in the American wilderness could it have been.

CHAIN AND COMPASS

from *Land of Promise*

Walter Havighurst

★

No other country has been so conscious of the surveyor's chain and compass as has America. Within a span of three generations a whole continent was surveyed. That was the first task in the vast process of occupation. While it was under way, surveying became an everyday science. "Navigation" appeared in the meager curriculum of schools and academies far inland. Handbooks of practical astronomy circulated in country stores and were studied by firelight in settlers' cabins. Surveying manuals were packed in the tin trunk beside the *Emigrant's Guide* and the family Bible. Gibson's *Theory and Practice of Surveying,* Gummere's *Treatise on Surveying,* Telford's *Elements of Surveying,* Simms' *Principle and Practice of Levelling* —these were the scientific literature of the unsettled country. Countless young Americans began their careers as members of a surveying crew and thousands who went on to other pursuits had followed surveying as their first profession.

Take the surveyors out of American history and the gaps become appalling. George Washington handled the chain and compass in the rough valleys of western Pennsylvania. William Clark, discoverer of the Columbia River, ran county lines in the Blue Ridge Mountains before he was nineteen years old and was surveyor-general of Illinois twenty years later. Abraham Lincoln ran section lines over the low hills that hem the Sangamon. Even Henry David Thoreau, a

transcendentalist at heart, measured the strict bounds of Concord township and located many farmers' corners. Hosts of men shared in that task that was as broad as the continent, using the light of Aldebaran and Polaris and the sun's rays to fix a net of invisible lines across America.

It must have left a mark on them as well as on their maps. They pushed ahead of settlement into new country, not roving like traders and hunters but methodically following a compass needle, taking measurements, calculating elevations, fixing exact and unalterable benchmarks. They waded the swamps and climbed the ridges, they set up their tripods in creek beds and hacked a way through thickets to run their uncompromising lines. So they learned a way of doing. There were no detours, no evasions and circumventions in their profession. They learned a way of thinking. Their lines ran straight over rough, confused and difficult country. They learned a way of living. For long seasons they took the fortunes of weather and isolation. They waited, sometimes weeks on end, for an observation of the stars to clinch their meridian. They fought wolves and camp rats and mosquitoes, they shook with ague and bled from the furious little wounds of the black fly, they counted their chain links over quaking swamps and snow-beak prairies. They advanced into a country that was land merely, and they left it invisibly and forever changed. Their field notes were the basis of a future civilization. With every sight and measurement they gave the land a pattern as fixed and final as the ordered stars. No men in America did more lasting work than theirs.

PEOPLE OF THE WOODS

Southern Illinois

1817

Morris Birkbeck

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Our journey across the Little Wabash was a complete departure from all mark of civilization. We saw no bears, as they are now buried in the thickets, and seldom appear by day; but, at every few yards, we saw recent marks of their doings, wallowing in the long grass, or turning over the decayed logs in quest of beetles or worms, in which work the strength of this animal is equal to that of four men. Wandering without track, where even the sagacity of our hunter-guide failed us, we at length arrived at the cabin of another hunter, where we lodged.

The man and his family are remarkable instances of the effect on the complexion produced by the perpetual incarceration of a thorough woodland life. Buried in the depth of a boundless forest, the breeze of health never reaches these poor wanderers; the bright prospect of distant hills fading away into the semblance of clouds, never cheered their sight. They are tall and pale, like vegetables that grow in a vault, pining for the light.

The cabin, which may serve as a specimen of those rudiments of houses, was formed of round logs, with apertures of three or four inches between. No chimney, but large intervals between the "clapboards" for the escape of smoke. The roof was, however, a more effectual covering than we have generally experienced, as it protected us very tolerably from a drenching night. Two bedsteads of unhewn logs, and cleft boards laid across;—two chairs, one of them without a bottom, and a

low stool, were all the furniture required by this numerous family. A string of buffalo hide stretched across the hovel, was a wardrobe for their rags; and their utensils, consisting of a large iron pot, some baskets, an effective rifle and two that were superannuated, stood about in corners, and the fiddle, which was only silent when we were asleep, hung by them.

At one of these lone dwellings we found a neat, respectable female, spinning under the little piazza at one side of the cabin, which shaded her from the sun. Her husband was absent on business, which would detain him some weeks. She had no family, and no companion but her husband's faithful dog, which usually attended him in his bear hunting in the winter. She was quite overcome with "lone" she said, and hoped we would untie our horses in the wood and sit awhile with her during the heat of the day. We did, and she rewarded us with a basin of coffee. Her husband was kind and good to her, and never left her without necessity, but a true lover of bear hunting, which he pursued alone, taking only his dog with him, although it is common for hunters to go in parties to attack this dangerous animal. The cabin of this hunter was neatly arranged, and the garden well stocked.

PIONEER BABIES

from *Daniel Boone*

James Daugherty

★

Kentucky cradles were never empty.
Torrents of fat naked babies overflowed from bulging cradles and cluttered crowded cabins.
Wide solemn eyes peered from behind their mothers' skirts at strangers.

Tiny toddlers squealed gleefully to skin-clad daddies bringing home fat turkeys from the forest.
Then they turned their toes toward the sundown.
They waddled west as soon as they could stagger.
They cooed and gurgled to the crimson sunset.
They reached their paws for a slice of the red pumpkin pie going down over the purple hills.
They wrassled the wild cats and they romped with wolves.
They pulled the panthers by their tails.
They tackled tall turkey gobblers and ruined their pride.
They rolled in rapture down the Rappahannock.
They rafted in their cradles down the Ohio.
They climbed the Tuscaroras and they coasted down the Cumberlands in three-cornered pants
And dug their toes into the black loam of the fat bottom lands
To grow up tall and lean and towheaded
Like the green-waving tasseled Indian corn.

PRAIRIE

from *The Oregon Trail*

1846

Francis Parkman

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The face of the country was dotted far and wide with countless hundreds of buffalo. They trooped along in files and columns, bulls, cows, and calves, on the green faces of the declivities in front. They scrambled away over the hills to the right and left; and far off, the pale blue swells in the extreme distance were dotted with innumerable specks. Sometimes I surprised shaggy old bulls grazing alone, or sleeping behind the ridges I ascended. They would leap up at my approach,

stare stupidly at me through their tangled manes, and then gallop heavily away. The antelope were very numerous; and as they are always bold when in the neighborhood of buffalo, they would approach to look at me, gaze intently with their great round eyes, then suddenly leap aside, and stretch lightly away over the prairie, as swiftly as a race-horse. Squalid, ruffian-like wolves sneaked through the hollows and sandy ravines. Several times I passed through villages of prairie-dogs, who sat, each at the mouth of his burrow, holding his paws before him in a supplicating attitude, and yelping away most vehemently, whisking his little tail with every squeaking cry he uttered. Prairie-dogs are not fastidious in their choice of companions; various long checkered snakes were sunning themselves in the midst of the village, and demure little gray owls, with a large white ring around each eye, were perched side by side with the rightful inhabitants. The prairie teemed with life. Again and again I looked toward the crowded hillsides, and was sure I saw horsemen; and riding near, with a mixture of hope and dread, for Indians were abroad, I found them transformed into a group of buffalo. There was nothing in human shape amid all this vast congregation of brute forms.

DUGOUT AND SOD HOUSE

from *The Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890*

Everett Dick

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. . . When the hardy settler began the conquest of the prairie, he found at hand material for shelter and fuel. The dugout and the sod house provided shelter, and buffalo chips and prairie grass served for fuel. Where timber was available it was

natural for the people to make the conventional log house. Even in the eastern part of the trans-Missouri-Red River territories, however, dugouts and makeshift, hay-covered, sod structures were used at first for shelter. As settlement crept westward and timber became more scarce, the homesteader came to depend more and more on soil and grass for homes. The typical prairie home was made of sod or was dug out of the side of a hill or ravine.

It was customary for the emigrant upon locating his homestead to arrange a temporary shelter until the permanent dwelling was ready for occupancy. When the wagon halted, the head of the family took out a spade and began to construct the dwelling. The dugout was more easily made than the sod house and hence many pioneers, anxious to get settled and to plant crops, made this type of dwelling their first home. In a few days excavation for the dugout was complete. The family meanwhile lived in the covered wagon box while the father used the running gears to haul the logs, poles, brush, and grass needed for the roof and front of the dugout. The mother of the family cooked the meals by a camp-fire and the group slept in the wagon or other temporary abode. Sometimes a hole dug in the ground and covered with canvas or sheets supplied the necessary shelter. Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Babcock of Fillmore County, Nebraska, made their first home by sewing four sheets together for a tent. Within a few days a windstorm blew down their shelter at night and wrecked their covering irreparably. The first residence in Antelope County, Nebraska, was a shack made of poles and grass.

The dugout was a room dug in the side of a hill or ravine. A few rails or posts were used to make a door frame and possibly a window. The door, of course, opened out into the ravine. The front wall was made of square cut turf, or logs if they were obtainable. A roof sloping back onto the hill was made of poles or logs covered over with brush, a layer of prairie grass thick enough to hold dirt, and finally a layer of

dirt over the grass. It was by no means ideal, however, for after a rain the high water often drove the occupants from their home. It was necessary to dig a trench from the house to the drainage level to carry water off the floor. Then, too, a frog pond for a front yard meant mosquitoes in summer and a very unhealthful environment. Even in dry weather the place was dirty. . . .

A spade was used to cut the sod into bricks about three feet long. These bricks were then carried to the building site by wagon or by a float made of planks or the forks of a tree. J. Clarence Norton of La Harpe, Kansas, related that in building the house on the homestead, the line for the wall was drawn after dark so that it could be located by the north star. For the first layer of the wall the three foot bricks were placed side by side around the foundation except where the door was to be made. The cracks were then filled with dirt and two more layers were placed on these. The joints were broken as in brick laying. Every third course was laid crosswise of the others to bind them together. This process was continued until the wall was high enough to put a roof on the structure. A door frame and two window frames were set in the wall and the sod built around them at the proper time. Sometimes the builder drove hickory withes down into the wall as a sort of reinforcement. The gables were built up of sod or frame according to the means of the settler. The poorer settler built a roof in the crudest manner. A forked post set in each end of the cabin furnished a support for the ridge pole. The rafters were made of poles and the sheeting of brush; a layer of prairie grass covered this, and over all sod was placed. The settler who could afford it put a frame roof on his sod house. In that event sheeting was nailed on the rafters and tar paper spread over the sheeting boards. This was then covered with sods thinner than those used to cover the side walls, and laid with grass side down; the cracks were filled with fine clay. From time to time this dirt filling had to be renewed as the rains

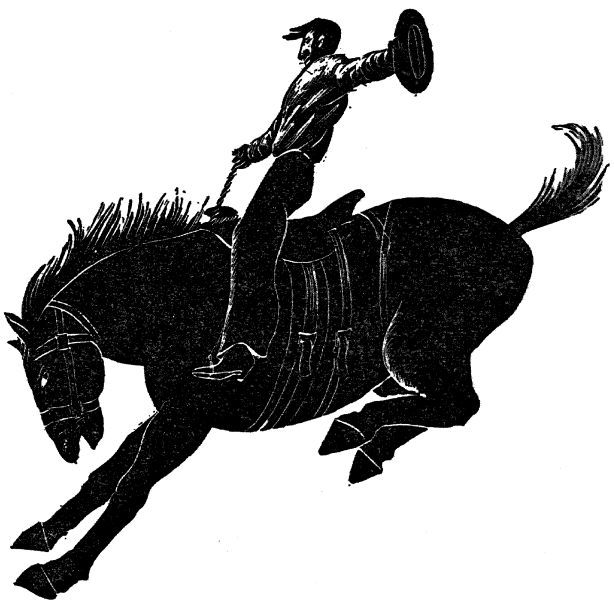
carried it away. In a short time great growths of sunflowers and grass appeared on the roofs. If the house were to be plastered, a mixture of clay and ashes was used. If it were to be a smooth finish, the builder took a spade and hewed the wall to a smooth finish and symmetrical proportions. The whole thing, as one pioneer said, was "made without mortar, square, plumb, or greenbacks." All that was needed was a pair of willing hands, and many home seekers came to the plains with no assets other than a wagon cover. The little sod cabin was frequently divided into two rooms by a piece of rag carpet or quilt. The windows and door were closed with buffalo robes or other blankets. The house was crudely furnished. A nail keg and a soap box did duty as chairs. A dry goods box made a table and a rude bed of boards was fashioned in the corner. When the migration immediately following the Civil War broke in its fury, the demand for doors, sashes, and blinds was so great that even small towns ordered in carload lots. The dealer at the little town of Milford, Nebraska, advertised in March, 1871, that he had three carloads of this type of merchandise on the way.

The ordinary sod house had grave faults. Its few windows permitted little light and air for ventilation. The immaculate housekeeper abominated them because they were so hard to keep clean. The dirt and straw kept dropping on everything in the house. The most disagreeable feature of these houses was the leaky roof. Few of the sod-covered houses really turned water. A heavy rain came, soaked into the dirt roof, and soon little rivulets of muddy water were running through the sleepers' hair. The sod-house dweller had to learn to migrate when it rained. If the rain came from the north, the north side of the house leaked, and it was necessary to move everything to the south side, if from the south, a move had to be made again. When the roof was saturated it dripped for three days after the sky was bright without. Dishes, pots, pans, and kettles were placed about the house to catch the continual

dripping. One pioneer woman remembered frying pancakes with someone holding an umbrella over her and the stove. A visitor at the home of a Dakota woman said that when great clouds rolled up in the afternoon the lady of the homestead began gathering up all the old dishes in the house and placing them here and there on the floor, on the stove, and on the bed. The visitor remarked that the prairie woman seemed to understand her business for when the rain came down in torrents a few minutes later every drop that came through the numerous holes in the roof of the shack went straight into those vessels. After a heavy rain it was necessary to hang all the bed clothing and wearing apparel on the line to dry. One old settler mentioned keeping the clothes in the covered wagon to keep them dry.

When the roof was well soaked its weight was immense. The heavy rafters sank deeper and deeper into the soggy walls until occasionally the roof caved in or the walls collapsed, burying people underneath the ruins. To prevent this kind of accident, heavy posts were placed in the house to support the roof; these were a great nuisance because they took up so much room. Frequently the cabin was covered with long coarse prairie grass. This type of roof also had the fault of dripping water after a heavy rain.

There were, however, some striking advantages of the sod house. It was cool in summer and warm in winter. There was no fear of the wind blowing it over and no danger of destruction by prairie fires. Neither was there danger of fire from a faulty fireplace. A fireplace was safely built of sod. The average life of a sod house was six or seven years.



CATTLE ROUND-UP IN THE OLD WEST

from *Theodore Roosevelt; An Autobiography*

Theodore Roosevelt

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The spring and early summer round-ups were especially for the branding of calves. There was much hard work and some risk on a round-up, but also much fun. The meeting-place was appointed weeks beforehand, and all the ranchmen of the territory to be covered by the round-up sent their representatives. There were no fences in the West that I knew, and their place was taken by the cowboy and the branding-iron. The cattle wandered free. Each calf was branded with the brand of the cow it was following. Sometimes in winter there was what we called line riding; that is, camps were established and the line riders traveled a definite beat across the desolate waste of snow, to and fro from one camp to another, to prevent the cattle from drifting. But as a rule nothing was done to keep the cattle in any one place. In the spring there was a general round-up in each locality. Each outfit took part in its own round-up and all the outfits of a given region combined to send representatives to the two or three round-ups that covered the neighborhoods near by into which their cattle might drift. For example, our Little Missouri round-up generally worked down the river from a distance of some fifty or sixty miles above my ranch towards the Kildeer Mountains, about the same distance below. In addition we would usually send representatives to the Yellowstone round-up, and to the round-up along the upper Little Missouri, and, moreover, if we heard that cattle had drifted, perhaps towards the Indian reservation southeast of us, we would send a wagon and rider after them.

At the meeting-point, which might be in the valley of a

half-dry stream, or in some broad bottom of the river itself, or perchance by a couple of ponds under some queerly shaped butte that was a landmark for the region round about, we would all gather on the appointed day. The chuck-wagons, containing the bedding and food, each drawn by four horses and driven by the teamster cook, would come jolting and rattling over the uneven sward. Accompanying each wagon were eight or ten riders, the cowpunchers, while their horses, a band of a hundred or so, were driven by the two herders, one of whom was known as the day wrangler and one as the night wrangler. The men were lean, sinewy fellows, accustomed to riding half-broken horses at any speed over any country by day or by night. They wore flannel shirts, with loose handkerchiefs knotted round their necks, broad hats, high-heeled boots with jingling spurs, and sometimes leather chaps, although often they merely had their trousers tucked into the tops of their high boots. There was a good deal of rough horseplay, and, as with any other gathering of men or boys of high animal spirits, the horseplay sometimes became very rough indeed; and as the men usually carried revolvers, and as there were occasionally one or two noted gun-fighters among them, there was now and then a shooting affray. A man who was a coward or who shirked his work had a bad time, of course; a man could not afford to let himself be bullied or treated as a butt; and, on the other hand, if he was "looking for a fight," he was certain to find it. But my own experience was that if a man did not talk until his associates knew him well and liked him, and if he did his work, he never had any difficulty in getting on. In my own round-up district I speedily grew to be friends with most of the men. When I went among strangers I always had to spend twenty-four hours in living down the fact that I wore spectacles, remaining as long as I could judiciously deaf to any side remarks about "four eyes," unless it became evident that my being quiet was misconstrued and that it was better to bring matters to a head at once.

If, for instance, I was sent off to represent the Little Missouri brands on some neighboring round-up, such as the Yellowstone, I usually showed that kind of diplomacy which consists in not uttering one word that can be avoided. I would probably have a couple of days' solitary ride, mounted on one horse and driving eight or ten others before me, one of them carrying my bedding. Loose horses drive best at a trot, or canter, and if a man is traveling alone in this fashion it is a good thing to have them reach the camp ground sufficiently late to make them desire to feed and sleep where they are until morning. In consequence I never spent more than two days on the journey from whatever the point was at which I left the Little Missouri, sleeping the one night for as limited a number of hours as possible.

As soon as I reached the meeting-place I would find out the wagon to which I was assigned. Riding to it, I turned my horses into the saddle-band and reported to the wagon boss, or, in his absence, to the cook—always a privileged character, who was allowed and expected to order men around. He would usually grumble savagely and profanely about my having been put with his wagon, but this was merely conventional on his part; and if I sat down and said nothing he would probably soon ask me if I wanted anything to eat, to which the correct answer was that I was not hungry and would wait until mealtime. The bedding rolls of the riders would be strewn around the grass, and I would put mine down a little outside the ring, where I would not be in any one's way, with my six or eight branding-irons beside it. The men would ride in, laughing and talking with one another, and perhaps nodding to me. One of their number, usually the wagon foreman, might put some question to me as to what brands I represented, but no other word would be addressed to me, nor would I be expected to volunteer any conversation. Supper would consist of bacon, Dutch oven bread, and possibly beef; once I won the good graces of my companions at the outset by appearing with two

antelope which I had shot. After supper I would roll up in my bedding as soon as possible, and the others would follow suit at their pleasure.

At three in the morning or thereabouts, at a yell from the cook, all hands would turn hurriedly out. Dressing was a simple affair. Then each man rolled and corded his bedding—if he did not, the cook would leave it behind and he would go without any for the rest of the trip—and came to the fire, where he picked out a tin cup, tin plate, and knife and fork, helped himself to coffee and to whatever food there was, and ate it standing or squatting as best suited him. Dawn was probably breaking by this time, and the trampling of unshod hoofs showed that the night wrangler was bringing in the pony herd. Two of the men would then run ropes from the wagon at right angles to one another, and into this as a corral the horses would be driven. Each man might rope one of his own horses, or more often point it out to the most skillful roper of the outfit, who would rope it for him—for if the man was an unskillful roper and roped the wrong horse or roped the horse in the wrong place there was a chance of the whole herd stampeding. Each man then saddled and bridled his horse. This was usually followed by some resolute bucking on the part of two or three of the horses, especially in the early days of each round-up. The bucking was always a source of amusement to all the men whose horses did not buck, and these fortunate ones would gather round giving ironical advice, and especially adjuring the rider not to "go to leather"—that is, not to steady himself in the saddle by catching hold of the saddle-horn.

As soon as the men had mounted, the whole outfit started on the long circle, the morning circle. Usually the ranch foreman who bossed a given wagon was put in charge of the men of one group by the round-up foreman; he might keep his men together until they had gone some ten or fifteen miles from camp, and then drop them in couples at different points. Each couple made its way toward the wagon, gathering all the cattle

it could find. The morning's ride might last six or eight hours, and it was still longer before some of the men got in. Singly and in twos and threes they appeared from every quarter of the horizon, the dust rising from the hoofs of the steers and bulls, the cows and calves, they had collected. Two or three of the men were left to take care of the herd while the others changed horses, ate a hasty dinner, and then came out to the afternoon work. This consisted of each man in succession being sent into the herd, usually with a companion, to cut out the cows of his brand or brands which were followed by unbranded calves, and also to cut out any mavericks or unbranded yearlings. We worked each animal gently out to the edge of the herd, and then with a sudden dash took it off at a run. It was always desperately anxious to break back and rejoin the herd. There was much breakneck galloping and twisting and turning before its desire was thwarted and it was driven to join the rest of the cut—that is, the other animals which had been cut out, and which were being held by one or two other men. Cattle hate being alone, and it was no easy matter to hold the first one or two that were cut out; but soon they got a little herd of their own, and then they were contented. When the cutting out had all been done, the calves were branded, and all misadventures of the "calf wrestlers," the men who seized, threw, and held each calf when roped by the mounted roper, were hailed with yelling laughter. Then the animals which for one reason or another it was desired to drive along with the round-up were put into one herd and left in charge of a couple of night guards, and the rest of us would loaf back to the wagon for supper and bed.

THE BANDANNA

from *A Vaquero of the Brush Country*

J. Frank Dobie

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Modern cowboys seem to be giving up the bandanna handkerchief. Perhaps the moving pictures have made it tawdry. Yet there was a time when this article was almost as necessary to a cowboy's equipment as a rope, and it served for purposes almost as varied. The prevailing color of the bandanna was red, but blues and blacks were common, and of course silk bandannas were prized above those made of cotton.

When the cowboy got up in the morning and went down to the water hole to wash his face he used his bandanna for a towel. Then he tied it around his neck, letting the fold hang down in front, thus appearing rather nattily dressed for breakfast. After he had roped out his bronc and tried to bridle him he probably found that the horse had to be blindfolded before he could do anything with him. The bandanna was what he used to blindfold the horse with. Mounted, the cowboy removed the blind from the horse and put it again around his own neck. Perhaps he rode only a short distance before he spied a big calf that should be branded. He roped the calf; then if he did not have a "piggin string"—a short rope used for tying down animals—he tied the calf's legs together with the bandanna and thus kept the calf fast while he branded it. In the summertime the cowboy adjusted the bandanna to protect his neck from the sun. He often wore gloves too, for he liked to present neat hands and neck. If the hot sun was in his face, he adjusted the bandanna in front of him, tying it so that the fold would hang over his cheeks, nose, and mouth like a mask. If his business was with a dust-raising herd of cattle,

the bandanna adjusted in the same way made a respirator; in blizzardly weather it likewise protected his face and ears. In the swift, unhalting work required in pen the cowboy could, without losing time, grab a fold of the bandanna loosely hung about his neck and wipe away the blinding sweat. In the pen, too, the bandanna served as a rag for holding the hot handles of branding irons.

Many a cowboy has spread his bandanna, perhaps none too clean itself, over dirty, muddy water and used it as a strainer to drink through; sometimes he used it as a cup towel, which he called a "drying rag." If the bandanna was dirty, it was probably not so dirty as the other apparel of the cowboy, for when he came to a hole of water, he was wont to dismount and wash out his handkerchief, letting it dry while he rode along, holding it in his hand or spread over his hat. Often he wore it under his hat in order to help keep his head cool. At other times, in the face of a fierce gale, he used it to tie down his hat. The bandanna made a good sling for a broken arm; it made a good bandage for a blood wound. Early Irish settlers on the Nueces River used to believe that a bandanna handkerchief that had been worn by a drowned man would, if cast into a stream above the sunken body, float until it came over the body and then sink, thus locating it. Many a cowboy out on the lonely plains has been buried with a clean bandanna spread over his face to keep the dirt, or the coarse blanket on which the dirt was poured, from touching it. The bandanna has been used to hang men with. Rustlers used to "wave" strangers around with it, as a warning against nearer approach, though the hat was more commonly used for signaling. Like the Mexican sombrero or the four-gallon Stetson, the bandanna could not be made too large. When the cowboys of the West make their final parade on the grassy shores of Paradise, the guidon that leads them should be a bandanna handkerchief. It deserves to be called the flag of the range country.

THE PONY EXPRESS

from *Roughing It*

Mark Twain

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In a little while all interest was taken up in stretching our necks and watching for the "pony-rider"—the fleet messenger who sped across the continent from St. Joe to Sacramento, carrying letters nineteen hundred miles in eight days! Think of that for perishable horse and human flesh and blood to do! The pony-rider was usually a little bit of a man, brimful of spirit and endurance. No matter what time of the day or night his watch came, and no matter whether it was winter or summer, raining, snowing, hailing, or sleeting, or whether his "beat" was a level straight road or a crazy trail over mountain crags and precipices, or whether it led through peaceful regions or regions that swarmed with hostile Indians, he must be always ready to leap into the saddle and be off like the wind! There was no idling-time for a pony-rider on duty. He rode fifty miles without stopping, by daylight, moonlight, starlight, or through the blackness of darkness—just as it happened. He rode a splendid horse that was born for a racer and fed and lodged like a gentleman; kept him at his utmost speed for ten miles, and then, as he came crashing up to the station where stood two men holding fast a fresh, impatient steed, the transfer of rider and mailbag was made in the twinkling of an eye, and away flew the eager pair and were out of sight before the spectator could get hardly the ghost of a look. Both horse and rider went "flying light." The rider's dress was thin, and fitted close; he wore a "roundabout," and a skull cap, and tucked his pantaloons into his boot-tops like a race-rider. He carried no arms—he carried nothing that was not absolutely necessary, for even the postage on his literary freight was

worth *five dollars a letter*. He got but little frivolous correspondence to carry—his bag had business letters in it, mostly. His horse was stripped of all unnecessary weight, too. He wore a little wafer of a racing saddle, and no visible blanket. He wore light shoes, or none at all. The little flat mail-pockets strapped under the rider's thighs would each hold about the bulk of a child's primer. They held many and many an important business chapter and newspaper letter, but these were written on paper as airy and thin as gold-leaf, nearly, and thus bulk and weight were economized. The stage-coach traveled about a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five miles a day (twenty-four hours), the pony-rider about two hundred and fifty. There were about eighty pony-riders in the saddle all the time, night and day, stretching in a long, scattering procession from Missouri to California, forty flying eastward, and forty toward the west, and among them making four hundred gallant horses earn a stirring livelihood and see a deal of scenery every single day in the year.

We had had a consuming desire, from the beginning, to see a pony-rider, but somehow or other all that passed us and all that met us managed to streak by in the night, and so we heard only a whiz and a hail, and the swift phantom of the desert was gone before we could get our heads out of the window. But now we were expecting one along every moment and would see him in broad daylight. Presently the driver exclaims:

"Here he comes!"

Every neck is stretched farther and every eye strained wider. Away across the endless dead level of the prairie a black speck appears against the sky, and it is plain that it moves. Well, I should think so! In a second or two it becomes a horse and rider, rising and falling, rising and falling—sweeping toward us nearer and nearer—growing more and more distinct, more and more sharply defined—nearer and still nearer, and the flutter of the hoofs comes faintly to the ear—another instant a whoop

and a hurrah from our upper deck, a wave of the driver's hand, but no reply, and man and horse burst past our excited faces and go swinging away like a belated fragment of a storm!

So sudden is it all and so like a flash of unreal fancy that, but for the flake of white foam left quivering and perishing on a mail sack after the vision had flashed by and disappeared, we might have doubted whether we had seen any actual horse and man at all, maybe.

DRIVING THE LAST SPIKE AT PROMONTORY POINT

from The Pacific Tourist, *J. R. Bowman's Illustrated Trans-Continental Guide to Travel, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, 1882-1883*

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American history, in its triumph of skill, labor, and genius, knows no event of greater thrilling interest, than the scene which attended the driving of the last spike, which united the East and West with the bands of iron. First of great enterprises since the world's known history began—that gigantic task of joining the two great oceans with bands of steel, over which thousands of iron monsters are destined to labor for unnumbered years, bearing to this young country continued wealth and prosperity. The completion of a project so grand in conception, so successful in execution, and likely to prove so fruitful and rich in promise, was worthy of world-wide celebrity.

Upon the 10th of May, 1869, the rival roads approached each other, and two lengths of rails were left for the day's work. At 8 A.M., spectators began to arrive; at quarter to 9 A.M., the whistle of the Central Pacific Railroad is heard,

and the first train arrives, bringing a large number of passengers. Then two additional trains arrive on the Union Pacific Railroad, from the East. At a quarter of 11 A.M., the Chinese workmen commenced leveling the bed of the road with picks and shovels, preparatory to placing the ties. At a quarter past eleven the Governor's (Governor Stanford's) train arrived. The engine was gaily decorated with little flags and ribbons—the red, white, and blue. The last tie is put in place—eight feet long, eight inches wide, and six inches thick. It was made of California laurel, finely polished, and ornamented with a silver escutcheon, bearing the following inscription:

THE LAST TIE LAID ON THE PACIFIC RAILROAD, MAY 10, 1869.

Then follow the names of the directors and officers of the Central Pacific Company and of the presenter of the tie.

The exact point of contact of the road was 1,085.8 miles west from Omaha, which allowed 690 miles to the Central Pacific Railroad, for Sacramento, for their portion of the work. The engine Jupiter, of the Central Pacific Railroad, and the engine 119 of the Union Pacific Railroad, moved up to within thirty feet of each other.

Just before noon the announcement was sent to Washington that the driving of the *last spike* of the railroad which connected the Atlantic and Pacific would be communicated to all the telegraph offices in the country the instant the work was done, and instantly a large crowd gathered around the offices of the Western Union Telegraph Company to receive the welcome news.

The manager of the company placed a magnetic ball in a conspicuous position, where all present could witness the performance, and connected the same with the main lines, notifying the various offices of the country that he was ready. New Orleans, New York, and Boston instantly answered "Ready."

In San Francisco, the wires were connected with the fire-alarm in the tower, where the heavy ring of the bell might

spread the news immediately over the city, as quick as the event was completed.

Waiting for some time in impatience, at last came this message from Promontory Point, at 2:27 P.M.

Almost ready. Hats off, prayer is being offered.

A silence for the prayer ensued; at 2:40 P.M., the bell tapped again, and the officer at Promontory said:

We have got done praying, the spike is about to be presented.

Chicago replied:

We understand, all are ready in the East.

From Promontory Point:

All ready now; the spike will soon be driven. The signal will be three dots for the commencement of the blows.

For a moment the instrument was silent, and then the hammer of the magnet tapped the bell, *one, two, three,* the signal. Another pause of a few seconds, and the lightning came flashing eastward, 2,400 miles to Washington; and the blows of the hammer on the spike were repeated instantly in telegraphic accents upon the bell of the Capitol. At 2:47 P.M., Promontory Point gave the signal, *"Done";* and the great American Continent was successfully spanned.

Immediately thereafter, flashed over the line the following official announcement to the Associated Press:

> Promontory Summit, Utah, May 10.—THE LAST RAIL IS LAID! THE LAST SPIKE IS DRIVEN! THE PACIFIC RAILROAD IS COMPLETED! The point of junction is 1,086 miles west of the Missouri River, and 690 miles east of Sacramento City.
>
> LELAND STANFORD,
> Central Pacific Railroad
>
> T. C. DURANT,
> SIDNEY DILLON,
> JOHN DUFF,
> Union Pacific Railroad.

Such were the telegraphic incidents that attended the completion of the greatest work of the age—but during these few expectant moments the scene itself at Promontory Point was very impressive.

After the rival engines had moved up toward each other, a call was made for the people to stand back, in order that all might have a chance to see. Prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Todd of Massachusetts. Brief remarks were then made by General Dodge and Governor Stanford. Three cheers were given for the Government of the United States, for the Railroad, for the Presidents, for the Star Spangled Banner, for the Laborers, and for those, respectively, who furnished the means. Four spikes were then furnished—two gold and two silver—by Montana, Idaho, California, and Nevada. They were each about seven inches long, and a little larger than the iron spike.

Dr. Harkness, of Sacramento, in presenting to Governor Stanford a spike of pure gold, delivered a short and appropriate speech.

The Hon. F. A. Tritle, of Nevada, presented Dr. Durant with a spike of silver, saying:

To the iron of the East, and the gold of the West, Nevada adds her link of silver to span the Continent and weld the oceans.

Governor Safford, of Arizona, presenting another spike, said:

Ribbed in iron, clad in silver, and crowned with gold, Arizona presents her offering to the enterprise that has banded the Continent and welded the oceans.

Dr. Durant stood on the north side of the tie, and Governor Stanford on the south side. At a given signal, these gentlemen struck the spikes, and at the same instant the electric spark was sent through the wires, east and west. The two locomotives moved up until they touched each other, and a bottle of wine was poured, as a libation, on the last rail.

A number of ladies graced the ceremonies with their presence, and at 1 P.M., under an almost cloudless sky, and in the presence of about 1,100 people, the greatest railroad on earth was completed.

A sumptuous repast was given to all the guests and railroad officers, and toward evening the trains each moved away and darkness fell upon the scene of joy and triumph.

Immediately after the ceremonies, the laurel tie was removed for preservation, and in its place an ordinary one substituted. Scarcely had it been put in its place before a grand advance was made upon it by the curiosity seekers and relic hunters and divided into numberless mementoes, and as fast as each tie was demolished and a new one substituted, this, too, shared the same fate, and probably within the first six months there were used as many new ties. It is said that even one of the rails did not escape the grand battery of knife and hack, and the first one had soon to be removed to give place to another.

A curious incident, connected with the laying of the last rails, has been little noticed hitherto. Two lengths of rails, 56 feet, had been omitted. The Union Pacific people brought up their pair of rails, and the work of placing them was done by Europeans. The Central Pacific people then laid their pair of rails, the labor being performed by Mongolians. The foremen, in both cases, were Americans. Here, near the center of the great American Continent, were representatives of Asia, Europe, and America—America directing and controlling.

IV

A Time of Testing

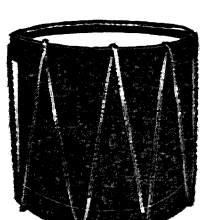
I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved, but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865)

★

To every man and every woman there comes a time of testing, some crisis which in the end determines how he or she will live. What is true of men and women is equally true of nations. America faced such a test in the war between its own states. In the North, we called it the Civil War or even the War of the Rebellion; in the South, we called it the War Between the States or the War of the Secession.

It was a terrible war and even today our country bears its scars. But out of it came some of the greatest of great Americans and two people, in particular, who have become legends. They were Abraham Lincoln and Robert E. Lee. Each of them was all that each of us would like to be. And it is by following their example that we and our country can become what we ought to be.



THE MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

Abraham Lincoln

★

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

THE BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Julia Ward Howe

★

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND MORE

James Sloane Gibbons

★

We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more,
From Mississippi's winding stream and from New England's shore;
We leave our plows and workshops, our wives and children dear,
With hearts too full for utterance, with but a silent tear;
We dare not look behind us, but steadfastly before;
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

If you look across the hilltops that meet the northern sky,
Long moving lines of rising dust your vision may descry;
And now the wind, an instant, tears the cloudy veil aside,
And floats aloft our spangled flag, in glory and in pride,
And bayonets in the sunlight gleam, and bands brave music pour;

We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!
If you look all up our valleys where the growing harvests shine,
You may see our sturdy farmer boys fast forming into line;
And children from their mothers' knees are pulling at the weeds,
And learning how to reap and sow against their country's needs.
And a farewell group stands weeping at every cottage door;
We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!

SHILOH

A Requiem (April, 1862)

Herman Melville

★

Skimming lightly, wheeling still,
The swallows fly low
Over the field in clouded days,
The forest field of Shiloh—
Over the field where April rain
Solaced the parched one stretched in pain
Through the pause of night
That followed the Sunday fight
Around the church of Shiloh—
The church so lone, the log-built one,
That echoed to many a parting groan
And natural prayer
Of dying foemen mingled there—
Foemen at morn, but friends at eve—
Fame or country least their care:

(What like a bullet can undeceive!)
But now they lie low,
While over them the swallows skim,
And all is hushed at Shiloh.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

1863

★

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

> That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Delivered at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863

Abraham Lincoln

★

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

1864

Thomas Buchanan Read

★

Up from the South, at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need;
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell; but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering South,
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth;

Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battlefield calls;
Every nerve of the charger was trained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind,
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire.
But lo! he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops.
What was done? What to do? A glance told him both.
Then striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there, because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.

With foam and with dust, the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and red nostril's play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say:
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester town to save the day!"

Hurrah! Hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah! Hurrah for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high,

Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldiers' Temple of Fame;
There, with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:
"Here is the steed that saved the day,
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE

from his second Inaugural Address, 1865

Abraham Lincoln

★

. . . With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan,—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

THE SURRENDER OF GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE

1865

from *The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*

Ulysses S. Grant

★

. . . I found him (Lee) at the house of a Mr. McLean, at Appomattox Court House, with Colonel Marshall, one of his staff officers, awaiting my arrival. The head of his column was occupying a hill, on a portion of which was an apple orchard, beyond a little valley which separated it from that on the crest of which Sheridan's forces were drawn up in line of battle to the south. . . .

I had known General Lee in the old army, and had served with him in the Mexican War, but did not suppose, owing to the difference in our age and rank, that he would remember me, while I would more naturally remember him distinctly, because he was the chief of staff of General Scott in the Mexican War.

When I had left camp that morning I had not expected so soon the result that was then taking place, and consequently was in rough garb. I was without a sword, as I usually was when on horseback in the field, and wore a soldier's blouse for a coat, with the shoulder straps of my rank to indicate to the army who I was. When I went into the house I found General Lee. We greeted each other, and after shaking hands took our seats. I had my staff with me, a good portion of whom were in the room during the whole of the interview.

What General Lee's feelings were I do not know. As he was

a man of much dignity, with an impassible face, it was impossible to say whether he felt inwardly glad that the end had finally come, or felt sad over the result, and was too manly to show it. Whatever his feelings, they were entirely concealed from my observation; but my own feelings, which had been quite jubilant on the receipt of his letter, were sad and depressed. I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse. I do not question, however, the sincerity of the great mass of those who were opposed to us.

General Lee was dressed in a full uniform which was entirely new, and was wearing a sword of considerable value, very likely the sword which had been presented by the State of Virginia; at all events, it was an entirely different sword from the one that would ordinarily be worn in the field. In my rough traveling suit, the uniform of a private with the straps of a lieutenant-general, I must have contrasted very strangely with a man so handsomely dressed, six feet high and of faultless form. But this was not a matter that I thought of until afterwards.

We soon fell into a conversation about old army times. He remarked that he remembered me very well in the old army; and I told him that as a matter of course I remembered him perfectly, but from the difference in our rank and years (there being about sixteen years difference in our ages), I had thought it very likely that I had not attracted his attention sufficiently to be remembered by him after such a long interval. Our conversation grew so pleasant that I almost forgot the object of our meeting, and said that he had asked for this interview for the purpose of getting from me the terms I proposed to give his army. I said that I meant merely that his army should lay down their arms, not to take them up again during

the continuance of the war unless duly and properly exchanged. He said that he had so understood my letter.

Then we gradually fell off again into conversation about matters foreign to the subject which had brought us together. This continued for some little time, when General Lee again interrupted the course of the conversation by suggesting that the terms I proposed to give his army ought to be written out. I called to General Parker, secretary on my staff, for writing materials, and commenced writing out the following terms (of the surrender) . . .

When I put my pen to the paper I did not know the first word that I should make use of in writing the terms. I only knew what was in my mind, and I wished to express it clearly, so that there could be no mistaking it. As I wrote on, the thought occurred to me that the officers had their own private horses and effects, which were important to them, but of no value to us; also that it would be an unnecessary humiliation to call upon them to deliver their side arms.

No conversation, not one word, passed between General Lee and myself, either about private property, side arms, or kindred subjects. He appeared to have no objection to the terms first proposed; or if he had a point to make against them he wished to wait until they were in writing to make it. When he read over that part of the terms about side arms, horses, and private property of the officers, he remarked, with some feeling, I thought, that this would have a happy effect upon his army.

Then, after a little further conversation, General Lee remarked to me again that their army was organized a little differently from the army of the United States (still maintaining by implication that we were two countries); that in their army the cavalrymen and artillerists owned their own horses; and he asked if he was to understand that the men who so owned their horses were to be permitted to retain them. I told him that as the terms were written they would not; that only the

officers were permitted to take their private property. He then, after reading over the terms a second time, remarked that that was clear.

I then said to him that I thought this would be about the last battle of the war—I sincerely hoped so; and I said further I took it that most of the men in the ranks were small farmers. The whole country had been so raided by the two armies that it was doubtful whether they would be able to put in a crop to carry themselves and their families through the next winter without the aid of the horses they were then riding. The United States did not want them, and I would, therefore, instruct the officers I left behind to receive the paroles of his troops to let every man of the Confederate army who claimed to own a horse or mule take the animal to his home. Lee remarked again that this would have a happy effect. . . .

General Lee, after all was completed and before taking his leave, remarked that his army was in a very bad condition for want of food, and that they were without forage; that his men had been living for some days on parched corn exclusively, and that he would have to ask me for rations and forage. I told him "certainly," and asked for how many men he wanted rations. His answer was "about twenty-five thousand," and I authorized him to send his own commissary and quartermaster to Appomattox Station, two or three miles away, where he could have, out of the trains we had stopped, all the provisions he wanted. As for forage, we had ourselves depended almost entirely upon the country for that. . . . Lee and I then separated as cordially as we had met, he returning to his own lines, and all went into bivouac for the night at Appomattox.

ROBERT E. LEE'S FAREWELL TO HIS ARMY

★

Headquarters Army of Northern Virginia
April 10, 1865

After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.

I need not tell the survivors of so many hard-fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but, feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that could compensate for the loss that would have attended the continuation of the contest, I have determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged.

You may take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection.

With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.

R. E. Lee, *General*

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

Walt Whitman

★

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.
O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning:
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.
My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;
From fearful trip, the victor ship comes in with object won:
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

ODE TO THE CONFEDERATE DEAD IN MAGNOLIA CEMETERY

Henry Timrod

★

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
And these memorial blooms.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
More proudly on these wreaths today,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
Shall overlook this bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
By mourning beauty crowned!

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

Francis Miles Finch

★

By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat,
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the roses, the Blue;
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So, with an equal splendor
The morning sun-rays fall,

With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
The cooling drip of the rain:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done.
In the storm of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day;
Under the blossoms, the Blue;
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

in Springfield, Illinois

Vachel Lindsay

★

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come—the shining hope of Europe free:
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

TABLEAU

Countee Cullen

★

Locked arm in arm they cross the way,
    The black boy and the white,
The golden splendor of the day,
    The sable pride of night.

From lowered blinds the dark folk stare,
    And here the white folk talk,
Indignant that these two should dare
    In unison to walk.

Oblivious to look and word
    They pass, and see no wonder
That lightning brilliant as a sword
    Should blaze the path of thunder.

V

A Land and its People

I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865)

★

First there was the land. Then there were the people. There were all kinds of people and they came from everywhere. The West was open space to take. The Statue of Liberty held out its welcoming arms. And the country grew. And the people grew.

"America is God's Crucible," wrote Israel Zangwill, "the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming!" Then he went on to say, "God is making the American."

This section of our book is about the America and the American that God made.

★ ★ ★

I AM AN AMERICAN

Elias Lieberman

★

I am an American.
My father belongs to the Sons of the Revolution;
My mother, to the Colonial Dames.

One of my ancestors pitched tea overboard in Boston Harbor;
Another stood his ground with Warren;
Another hungered with Washington at Valley Forge.
My forefathers were Americans in the making:
They spoke in her council halls;
They died on her battle-fields;
They commanded her troop-ships;
They cleared her forests.
Dawns reddened and paled.
Staunch hearts of mine beat fast at each new star
In the nation's flag.
Keen eyes of mine foresaw her greater glory:
The sweep of her seas,
The plenty of her plains,
The man-hives in her billion-wired cities.
Every drop of blood in me holds a heritage of patriotism.
I am proud of my past.
I am an AMERICAN.

I am an American.
My father was an atom of dust,
My mother a straw in the wind,
To His Serene Majesty.

One of my ancestors died in the mines of Siberia;
Another was crippled for life by twenty blows of the knout.
Another was killed defending his home during the massacres.
The history of my ancestors is a trail of blood
To the palace-gate of the Great White Czar.
But then the dream came—
The dream of America.
In the light of the Liberty torch
The atom of dust became a man
And the straw in the wind became a woman
For the first time.

"See," said my father, pointing to the flag that fluttered near,
"That flag of stars and stripes is yours;
It is the emblem of the promised land.
It means, my son, the hope of humanity.
Live for it—die for it!"
Under the open sky of my new country I swore to do so;
And every drop of blood in me will keep that vow.
I am proud of my future.
I am an AMERICAN.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Katharine Lee Bates

★

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

AMERICAN MUSE

Stephen Vincent Benét

★

American muse, whose strong and diverse heart
So many men have tried to understand
But only made it smaller with their art,
Because you are as various as your land,

As mountainous-deep, as flowered with blue rivers,
Thirsty with deserts, buried under snows,
As native as the shape of Navajo quivers,
And native, too, as the sea-voyaged rose.

Swift runner, never captured or subdued,
Seven-branched elk beside the mountain stream,
That half a hundred hunters have pursued
But never matched their bullets with the dream,

Where the great huntsmen failed, I set my sorry
And mortal snare for your immortal quarry.

You are the buffalo-ghost, the broncho-ghost
With dollar-silver in your saddle-horn,
The cowboys riding in from Painted Post,
The Indian arrow in the Indian corn,

And you are the clipped velvet of the lawns
Where Shropshire grows from Massachusetts sods,
The grey Maine rocks—and the war-painted dawns
That break above the Garden of the Gods.

The prairie-schooners crawling toward the ore
And the cheap car, parked by the station-door.

Where the skyscrapers lift their foggy plumes
Of stranded smoke out of a stony mouth,
You are that high stone and its arrogant fumes,
And you are ruined gardens in the South

And bleak New England farms, so winter-white
Even their roofs look lonely, and the deep,
The middle grainland where the wind of night
Is like all blind earth sighing in her sleep.

A friend, an enemy, a sacred hag
With two tied oceans in her medicine-bag.

They tried to fit you with an English song
And clip your speech into the English tale.

But, even from the first, the words went wrong.
The catbird pecked away the nightingale.

The homesick men begot high-cheekboned things
Whose wit was whittled with a different sound,
And Thames and all the rivers of the kings
Ran into Mississippi and were drowned.

They planted England with a stubborn trust,
But the cleft dust was never English dust.

Stepchild of every exile from content
And all the disavouched, hard-bitten pack
Shipped overseas to steal a continent
With neither shirts nor honor to their back,

Pimping grandee and rump-faced regicide,
Apple-cheeked younkers from a windmill-square,
Puritans stubborn as the nails of Pride,
Rakes from Versailles and thieves from County Clare,

The black-robed priests who broke their hearts in vain
To make you God and France or God and Spain.

These were your lovers in your buckskin-youth,
And each one married with a dream so proud
He never knew it could not be the truth
And that he coupled with a girl of cloud.

And now to see you is more difficult yet
Except as an immensity of wheel
Made up of wheels, oiled with inhuman sweat
And glittering with the heat of ladled steel.

All these you are, and each is partly you,
And none is false, and none is wholly true.

SHELTER

from *American Ways of Life*

George R. Stewart

★

In considering the development of the United States we are constantly inclined to forget one important fact—the utter and abysmal ignorance of the first colonists as to how to cope with the wilderness. Transferred immediately, without experience or schooling from the highly civilized countries of England and Holland, they can only be described as complete greenhorns. They were much more innocent and helpless, in fact, than the average American man of today would be if placed in similar circumstances. The present-day American has had some boy-scout training, or gone on a camping trip, or at the very least he has read in books or picked up at school some tradition of pioneering. He would be likely, moreover, to have some knowledge of the dangers of mosquitoes, rats, and polluted drinking water.

The men who landed at Jamestown knew none of these things; apparently they did not even know how to make themselves comfortable. And being comfortable, we may say, means a great deal more, when it comes to founding a colony, than merely being comfortable. If a man is cold and wet and unable to sleep well, he soon grows dispirited and listless. Then he wears down physically, and falls sick at the first occasion. Once down, he may never get up. One reason for the death of many of the Jamestown colonists may have been merely their inability to shelter themselves. . . .

Shelter was like drink. Unlike food and clothing, but like drink, it was too bulky to be brought over in the ships, except in a makeshift way. Tents could be transported, and there were tents at Jamestown, but even before the first hot

and humid summer had passed, the cloth was rotten. The settlers erected temporary shelters to supplement or replace the tents, but seem to have botched the job, being quite inexperienced in such matters. Smith describes the "cabins" as "worse than nought." Doubtless they were flimsy structures of branches and bark that gave shade and shed a light rain, but would be of little help against the downpour and wind of a Virginia thunderstorm.

In New England it was the same story. Bradford sums it up in a couplet:

> And till such time as we could houses get,
> We were exposed to too much cold and wet.

At Boston the poorer people spent much of the first winter with little other shelter than tents. They suffered severely, as they naturally would, when trying to live through a Massachusetts winter with no better protection.

. . . After they had seen Indian houses, the colonists had some models to work by. Smith describes these, not without a suggestion of envy at the savages' ingenuity: "Their houses are built like our arbors of small young springs (saplings) bowed and tied, and so close covered with mats or the barks of trees very handsomely, that notwithstanding either wind, rain, or weather, they are as warm as stoves." Some settlers imitated these structures, and the Indian word *wigwam* was used to describe them.

The dugout was another expedient, although the word in this meaning did not come into use until the nineteenth century. Some of the first Jamestown settlers are described as living in "holes within the ground." The dugouts of the first settlers of Concord, Massachusetts, have become famous by being commemorated in Thoreau's *Walden*. "Old Johnson, in his 'Wonder-Working Providence,' speaking of the first settlers of this town, with whom he was contemporary, tells us that 'they burrow themselves in the earth for their first shelter un-

der some hillside, and casting the soil (earth) aloft upon timber, they make a smoky fire against the earth, at the highest point.' " As might be expected, such elaborate fox-holes were far from satisfactory, and as Johnson continues, perhaps too mildly, "the long rains penetrate through, to their great disturbance in the night season." The same writer applies the word *wigwam* to these dugouts, good evidence that, as might be expected, it had come to mean any kind of makeshift shelter.

Besides cabins and wigwams, the settlers also erected what they called huts, booths, and cottages (. . . we would call them shacks). The very multiplicity of terms probably indicates that these shelters were not particularly one thing or another, but were merely the expedients of hard-pressed people who had no specific answer to the problem at hand.

. . . The Dutch were not better prepared. In 1626 a description of the settlement on Manhattan Island indicates that the countinghouse was built of stone, thatched with reed. Then it adds, "the other houses are of the bark of trees." Such structures must have been no better than the huts and hovels and booths of the English.

Obviously one of the first needs of the colonists was for decent houses. The wigwam, easily constructed and proved by experience to be adapted to the climate, might actually have served them very well as a starting point, and they could then have elaborated upon it. But just as the colonists rejected what the Indians had to offer as regards clothing, and many other matters, so also they rejected the Indians' system of housing. A wigwam could keep the cold and rain out, but it lacked the associations of civilization and Christianity and home. So, as their models, the colonists kept in their minds the houses of England and Holland.

THE VILLAGE GREEN

from *Village Greens of New England*

Louise Andrews Kent

★

A common is not necessarily a green, although a green is always a common. Common is the larger term and may mean only rough, rocky, upland pasture with no houses near it at all. A green is the center of a community. It may be called a common but still it has about it a feeling of compactness, of neighborliness that belongs to the time when small towns were self-sufficing, weaving wool shorn from their own sheep, grinding their own grain, baking bricks for the occasional mansion house that accents the green and white pattern of the village, making their own harness and saddles from the hides of their own steers.

Local craftsmen built the houses around the greens. Glass for the small-paned windows and for the fanlights over the doors came from a distance, but the timbers and clapboards, shingles and panels once grew on hillsides above the town. The brook with its blue flags and jewelweed supplied the power that sawed the boards. The village blacksmith hammered out hinges and latches. If nails were needed, he made them, but many of the old houses were joined almost entirely with wooden pegs. It is natural enough that the houses look as if they grew out of the ground on which they stand. For the most part they did.

Those days when the blacksmith would finish shoeing a horse and then set to work on a strap hinge for somebody's barn door are gone long ago. The door where the hinge still swings is a century old or more. The common is often much older and the underlying reason for its existence may be traced back a thousand years before it gets lost in the mists

of antiquity. The English settlers, who came first to Plymouth and a few years later to Salem and Boston, brought with them ideas about the ownership of land that were already old in England when William the Conqueror crossed the channel. The system of agriculture, based on these ideas, came into England with the Angles and Saxons. It was called the common field system. The historian, Tacitus, found German tribes carrying on farming in this way which goes back to the time when nomads settled down and had to plan for a fair division of land. First the division was among members of a family; then, as the group increased, between members of a clan, later among neighbors.

There is a record of how in 1500 twelve elders of a village organized a community. They began by laying out a village green, which was in the center of the town and was to be used as a night pasture to protect cattle from wolves and thieves. The rest of the land was divided into plough land, meadow land, and common. Each householder was assigned a piece of plough land near his house for an orchard. His meadows might be at some distance away. Each holding contained some of the better land and some of the poorer. Sometimes things were equalized by assigning a larger amount of the poorer land to one owner.

The common land belonged to the whole village and all the landholders had certain rights in it. They could lop off the limbs for their own firewood, but not cut down trees and go into the lumber business. They could dig up gravel or clay for their own use but not sell it. They had the right of turbary, the cutting of turf for fuel. This fuel might consist of a gorse bush, roots and all, and the turf that came with it—a back-breaking and prickly privilege. Villagers could remove grass from the common land but only "by the mouths of their cattle"; they could not store it or sell it.

If you have in your china cupboard a blue Staffordshire plate bordered with seashells or roses and showing Boston

State House and some placid cows, removing, or having recently removed, grass by their mouths from the Common, you have an early nineteenth-century assertion of one of these ancient rights. Indeed, only the other day we saw a lovely, cream-colored Jersey being milked on Boston Common. Were she and her calf, an innocent looking creature as pretty as a young fawn, driven to the Common along the old right of way leading from Beacon Hill by which Benjamin Franklin and later Ralph Waldo Emerson used to drive the family cows? We like to think so, although, as this event occurred in National Dairy Week, we have an uneasy feeling that more likely the visitors arrived on the Charles Street side and in a truck.

On the common, cattle were more easily protected from wolves. Wolves were a danger to the early settlements and so were Indians. Even the friendly Indians sometimes found it easier to hunt beef than venison. The earliest settlements were often enclosed by a stockade behind which animals as well as owners could be safe from Indian attacks. Our grandmother used to tell us a story, told her by her great grandmother, about a small girl, Hepzibah Gray, who lived in a lonely, seventeenth-century settlement west of Boston. It consisted of a few houses clustered together and fenced away from the shadowy wilderness where at night a cry might be the howling of a wolf, the scream of a catamount, or an Indian war whoop. When darkness came, the only light was from rushes dipped in grease or from the logs burning in the fireplace. Brick chimneys were a luxury then for many of these early houses had chimneys of wood daubed with clay. The Grays' house had a brick chimney and also glass in its diamond-paned windows. Hepzibah liked to look through them and watch for her father and the other men of the village to come home from their work in the fields outside. Her big brother would be driving the brindled cow back to the night pasture and her father, with his gun over his shoulder, tired from ploughing all day, would be walking beside the oxen.

Sometimes her father went hunting and the oxen would be tethered outside on the common. It could hardly be called a green yet. There were still stumps of trees on it and although there was grass, there were weeds too—goldenrod, asters, ferns, joe-pye weed. Where the brush had been piled there were raspberries growing up. There were blackberries, too. Hepzibah had picked some that day and was saving the biggest and shiniest ones for her father. He was out hunting and he might bring back a wild turkey. Hepzibah knew just how it would look with the sun shining on the bronze feathers. She knew a good deal about her world although, in spite of being four years old, she did not talk plainly. Indeed she preferred not to talk at all. The mothers of more loquacious daughters pitied Mrs. Gray for having such a backward child.

On this September day the maples had already begun to turn and Hepzibah was watching the path under the flame and orange branches. Once she thought she saw someone move along it. She pushed open the casement to see better but the path was empty. Her mother was making soft soap in a wooden bucket, stirring it with a long paddle cut from a piece of pine. Hepzibah wrinkled her small nose and leaned farther out the window. The smell of soap was not one she liked.

This time she was sure she saw something move in the maples beyond the raspberry patch. She heard a noise—only a rustle, hardly more than a robin makes leaving its nest. Then something rose out of the brush pile: first some feathers, then some greasy black hair and below it a face streaked with red and black paint, with a red and black band around the mouth making it look enormous.

Hepzibah got down off the bench she had been standing on and tugged at her mother's skirt.

"Him top fevvers, him head, him ugly mouf," she said.

Her mother did not understand.

"Go and watch for father. He'll come soon," she said.

Hepzibah went back to the window and watched the brush pile. Perhaps the varmint—that was what she had heard her father call Indians—had gone away, but he hadn't. This time she saw two of them—feathers, black hair, hideously smeared faces and all, rise again out of the brush, only nearer, almost at the house. She ran to her mother again and tugged hard at her skirt.

"Two top fevvers, two ugly mouf," she said.

Still her mother did not understand her.

"Two *varmints,*" the little girl gasped out, driven to speaking plainly.

Her mother lifted the heavy bucket of soap and moved quietly to the window as the feathers rose above the sill and after them the red and black faces and the terrible mouths. Hepzibah saw her mother swing the bucket, saw the golden stream of hot soap fly through the air. There were screams, worse than the yelling of panthers, as the Indians crashed through the brush, scrambled over the fence, and ran off into the woods. Ezekiel Gray heard them as he came home with a turkey over his shoulder. He came running through the asters to the door, thumped on it, calling, until his wife unbarred it.

They told him the story, she and Hepzibah. He told it to every one in the settlement—until people got pretty tired of hearing it, our grandmother said—and he always ended up, "I want you should know that Hepzibah can talk as plain as anyone when she's a mind to."

Rights of pasturage used to belong to certain houses in America just as they did in England. We like to imagine the present residents of Beacon Street in the section opposite Boston Common driving cows to pasture, lopping off branches (estovers), bringing in wood (firebote), and cutting turf. Unfortunately for this dream, the city took away these rights many years ago so there is no use renting an apartment today in one of those houses with violet glass windows so as to pasture your cow across the street! In fact, commons and greens

are seldom places for pasturage now, but they are still used for pleasure, a pleasure which they offer to every visitor willing to turn aside from main roads and rest awhile under their elms. The roots of so many Americans are in these peaceful village commons that they bring to us not only a sense of dignity, serenity, and quiet beauty, but also of home-coming.

CATECHISM

from *The New England Primer*

★

A In *Adam's* Fall
We Sinned all.

B Thy Life to Mend
This *Book* Attend.

C The *Cat* doth play
And after flay.

D A *Dog* will bite
A Thief at night.

E An *Eagle's* flight
Is out of sight.

F The Idle *Fool*
Is whipt at School.

G As runs the *Glass*
Man's life doth pass.

H My Book and *Heart*
Shall never part.

J *Job* feels the Rod
Yet blesses GOD.

K Our *King* the good
No man of blood.

L The *Lion* bold
The *Lamb* doth hold.

M The *Moon* gives light
In time of night.

N *Nightingales* sing
In time of Spring.

O The Royal *Oak* it was the Tree
That saved his Royal Majesty.

P *Peter* denies
His Lord and cries.

Q *Queen* Esther comes
In Royal state
To save the Jews
From dismal fate.

R *Rachel* doth mourn
For her first-born.

S *Samuel* anoints
Whom God appoints.

T *Time* cuts down all,
Both great and small.

U *Uriah's* beauteous wife
Made David seek his life.

W *Whales* in the Sea
God's Voice obey.

X *Xerxes* the great did die
And so must you and I.

Y *Youth* forward slips
Death soonest nips.

Z *Zacheus* he
Did climb the Tree
His Lord to see.

RULE OF THUMB

Bianca Bradbury

★

New England says, "Make do, or go without,"
So they make do.
A garment's better for a patch or two;
What's brash, new, raw, is not for them,
What's worn, indigenous, has their esteem.
By the being turned, let out and dyed
The hand-me-down is glorified,
And fifty years are not too much
To wear an ax helve smooth to touch.

Then take their weather—they
Make do with what their betters throw away;

Heat waves, cold fronts, glacial
Hurricanes or any special
Cast-off storms that no one else will take.

The Old World sent its odds and ends to make
New England—then it taught them: "Wear it out,
Eat it up, make do." One simple rule
Turns out the Yankee article
Genuine and Simon-pure,
Something which will last, which will endure.

OUR TOWN

Prologue to Act I

Thornton Wilder

★

The name of the town is Grover's Corners, New Hampshire —just across the Massachusetts line: longitude forty-two degrees, forty minutes: latitude seventy degrees, thirty-seven minutes.

The first act shows a day in our town. The day is May 7, 1901. The sky is beginning to show some streaks of light over in the east there, behind our mount'in. The morning star always gets wonderful bright the minute before it has to go.

Well, I'd better show you how our town lies. Up here is Main Street. Way back there is the railway station; tracks go that way. Polish Town's across the tracks and some Canuck families. Over there is the Congregational Church; across the street's the Presbyterian. Methodist and Unitarian are over there. Baptist is down in the holla' by the river. Catholic Church is over beyond the tracks.

Here's the Town Hall and Post Office combined; jail's in

the basement. Bryan once made a speech from the steps here. Along here's a row of stores. Hitching posts and horse blocks in front of them. First automobile's going to come along in about five years—belonged to Banker Cartwright, our richest citizen . . . lives in the big white house up on the hill.

Here's the grocery store and here's Mr. Morgan's drugstore. Most everybody in town manages to look into those two stores once a day. Public school's over yonder. High school's still farther over. Quarter of nine mornings, noontimes, and three o'clock afternoons, the hull town can hear the yelling and screaming from those schoolyards.

This is our doctor's house—Doc Gibbs. This is the back door. . . . There's a garden here. Corn . . . peas . . . beans . . . hollyhocks . . . heliotrope . . . and a lot of burdock.

In those days our newspaper come out twice a week—the Grover's Corners *Sentinel*—and this is Editor Webb's house. And this is Mrs. Webb's garden. Just like Mrs. Gibbs's, only it's got a lot of sunflowers, too. Right here, big butternut tree.

Nice town, y'know what I mean? Nobody very remarkable ever come out of it—s'far as we know. The earliest tombstones in the cemetery up there on the mountain say 1670, 1680—they're Grovers and Cartwrights and Gibbses and Herseys—same names as are around here now.

Well, as I said, it's about dawn. The only lights on in town are in a cottage over by the tracks where a Polish mother's just had twins. And in the Joe Crowell house, where Joe Junior's getting up so as to deliver the paper. And in the depot, where Shorty Hawkins is gettin' ready to flag the five forty-five for Boston. Naturally, out in the country—all around —they've been lights on for some time, what with milkin' and so on. But town people sleep late. . . .

MENDING WALL

Robert Frost

★

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it

Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down!" I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there,
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness, as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

STREET CLEANING AND LIGHTING IN PHILADELPHIA

from the *Autobiography*

Benjamin Franklin

★

Our city [Philadelphia], though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages plowed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market

was at length paved with brick, so that being once in the market they had firm footing; but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the brick foot pavement that was on the side next the houses. This for some time gave an easy access to the market dry-shod; but the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry I found a poor, industrious man, who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbors' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighborhood that might be obtained from this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having in windy weather the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences; it was unanimously signed and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England, in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for light-

ing as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, giving a sample of the utility of lamps by placing one at his door, that the people were impressed with the idea of lighting all the city. The honor of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London. These were found inconvenient in these respects: they admitted no air below; the smoke therefore did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford, giving besides the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting the air below to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued bright till morning; and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

COTTON MATHER'S ADVICE

from a letter to Rev. Samuel Mather, 1784

Benjamin Franklin

★

When I was a boy, I met with a book entitled "Essays to Do Good," which I think was written by your father [Cotton Mather]. It had been so little regarded by a former possessor that several leaves of it were torn out, but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking as to have an influence on my

conduct through life, for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good* than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

You mention your being in your seventy-eighth year. I am in my seventy-ninth. We are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam overhead. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "Stoop, stoop!" I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, "You are young and have the world before you. *Stoop* as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps." This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it when I see pride mortified and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

THE WHISTLE

1779

Benjamin Franklin

★

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed

with the sound of a *whistle,* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle,* but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

This however was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle;* and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

When I saw one too ambitious of court favour, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man,* said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man,* said I, *you are providing pain for yourself,*

instead of pleasure; you gave too much for your whistle.

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity,* say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.* . . .

FASHIONS IN NEW YORK, 1797

From a letter written by Rachel Huntington, daughter of Benjamin Huntington, Governor of Connecticut.

★

New York, May 28th, 1797

My dear sister,

. . . I have bought two bands which are the most fashionable trimmings for beaver hats, a white one for the blue hat, and a yellow one for the black one; they should be put twice around the crown and fastened forward in the form of a beau knot. Brother has got each one of you a pink silk shawl which are very fashionable also—Many ladies wear them for turbans, made in the manner that you used to make muslin ones last summer; George has given me one like them. The fine lace cost 10 shillings a yard, and I think it is very handsome. There is enough for two handkerchiefs and two double tuckers. The way to make handkerchiefs is to set lace, or a ruffle on a straight piece of muslin (only pieced on the back to

make it set to your neck) and put it on so as to show only the ruffle, and make it look as if it was set on the neck of your gown. . . . I have got a braid of hair which cost four dollars. It should be fastened up with a comb (without plaiting) under your turban if it has a crown, and over it, if without a crown. Brother has got some very beautiful satin muslin and also some handsome "tartan plaid" gingham for your gowns. . . . Sleeves should be made half a yard wide and not drawed (gathered) less than seven or eight times. I think they look best to have two or three drawings close together and a plain spot alternately. Some of the ladies have their sleeves covered with drawing tacks, and have their elbows uncovered. If you don't like short sleeves, you should have long ones with short ones to come down almost to your elbows, drawed four or five by the bottom. If you want to walk with long gowns, you must draw the train up through one of the pocket holes . . .

LIFE IN VIRGINIA

1782

From the diary of Lucinda Lee, a Virginia girl, on a visit to her cousins, the Lees and the Washingtons.

★

September 19, 1782

Today we dine at old Mrs. Gordon's: I flatter myself I shall spend the day agreeably. This evening Colonel Ball insisted on our drinking tea with him: we did, and I was much pleased with my visit; his wife was not at home.

I have returned, and am sitting alone, writing to my dearest Polly. I don't think I ever met with kinder, better people in my life; they do everything in their power to make you

happy. I have almost determined not to go to the races this fall; every one appears to be astonished at me, but I am sure there is no solid happiness to be found in such amusements. I have no notion of sacrificing my own ease and happiness to the opinion of the world in these matters. They laugh, and tell me while I am moping at home, other girls will be enjoying themselves at races and balls; but I never will, I am determined, go to one unless I have an inclination.

September 20

I have spent this morning in reading *Lady Julia Mandeville*, and was much affected. Indeed, I think I never cried more in my life reading a novel: the style is beautiful, but the tale is horrid.

September 22

We had a very pleasant walk; got a number of grapes and nuts on our way. Lucy and I are going to walk in the garden, to get some pink-seed I am anxious to have.

October 5

Mr. Pinkard and a Mr. Lee came here today from the Fredericksburg races. How sorry I was to hear Republican was beaten. I was really interested in that race. Adieu. I must crape my hair for dinner.

October 27

When we got here we found the house pretty full. Nancy was here. I had to dress in a great hurry for dinner. About sunset Nancy, Milly, and myself took a walk in the garden. It is the most beautiful place. We were mighty busy cutting thistles to try our sweethearts, when Mr. Washington caught us; and you can't conceive how he plagued us—chased us all over the garden, and was quite impertinent.

I must tell you of our frolic after we went in our room. We

took it into our heads to want to eat; well, we had a large dish of bacon and beef; after that, a bowl of Sago cream; and after that, an apple pie. While we were eating the apple pie in bed—God bless you! making a great noise—in came Mr. Washington dressed in Hannah's short gown and petticoat, and then Cousin Molly. Hannah soon followed, dressed in his coat. They joined us in eating the apple pie, and then went out. After this we took it in our heads to want to eat oysters. We got up, put on our wrappers, and went down in the cellar to get them: do you think Mr. Washington did not follow us and scare us just to death? We went up, though, and eat our oysters. We slept in the old Lady's room, too, and she sat laughing fit to kill herself at us.

MOTHER OF PRESIDENTS,

ORATORS, PRIDE

Robert P. Tristram Coffin

★

Virginia is peanuts, paddocks white
Against the Blue Ridge and the night,
Lace of elm twigs' shadowy scrawls
On pink brick of Williamsburg walls.

The Old Dominion is a myth,
Quick, freckled boys, and kin and kith
One family to cousins at ten removes,
Neighs of stallions, sound of hooves.

Virginia is worm fences, weathered,
Tobacco, nut-brown horses tethered,

She is red-clay hills and runs,
Red with blood of her finest sons.

She is Monticello's dome,
Black singers crowding a one-room home,
The mountain cabin's straight-up smoke,
John Randolph of old Roanoke.

Virginia is orators, hams aged sweet,
Men who had rather talk than eat,
Men who had rather fight than talk,
And small boys tough as a fighting cock.

She is lawyers, Presidents,
And pride that stalks with clothes in rents,
Stonewall Jackson teaching black
Boys the Bible when war ran slack.

She is Jefferson's serpentine wall,
Silver hunting horn bringing in Fall,
The Shenandoah white with wheat
Or pink with apple trees blowing sweet.

Mother of our Father George,
Plantations and blue mountain gorge,
Pines that wade into the sea,
And the demigod that was Lee!

MY FATHERS CAME FROM KENTUCKY

Vachel Lindsay

★

I was born in Illinois—
Have lived there many days,
And I have Northern words,
And thoughts,
And ways.

But my great-grandfathers came
To the west with Daniel Boone,
And taught his babes to read,
And heard the redbird's tune;

And heard the turkey's call,
And stilled the panther's cry,
And rolled on the blue-grass hills,
And looked God in the eye.

And feud and Hell were theirs;
Love, like the moon's desire,
Love like a burning-mine,
Love like rifle-fire.

I tell tales out of school
Till these Yankees hate my style,
Why should the young lad cry,
Shout with joy for a mile?

Why do I faint with love
Till the prairies dip and reel?

My heart is a kicking horse
Shod with Kentucky steel.

No drop of my blood from north
Of Mason and Dixon's line.
And this racer in my breast
Tears my ribs for a sign.

But I ran in Kentucky hills
Last week. They were hearth and home . . .
Under the redbird's wings
Was peace and honeycomb.

I HEAR AMERICA SINGING

Walt Whitman

★

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at the noon intermission or at sundown;
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to her, and to none else;

The day what belongs to the day—at night, the party of young
fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

AMERICA WAS SCHOOLMASTERS

Robert P. Tristram Coffin

★

America was forests,
America was grain,
Wheat from dawn to sunset,
And rainbows trailing rain.

America was beavers,
Buffalo in seas,
Cornsilk and the johnnycake,
Songs of scythes and bees.

America was brown men
With eyes full of the sun,
But America was schoolmasters,
Tall one by lonely one.

They hewed oak, carried water,
Their hands were knuckleboned,
They piled on loads of syntax
Till the small boys groaned.

They taught the girls such manners
As stiffened them for life,
But made many a fine speller,
Good mother and good wife.

They took small wiry children,
Wild as panther-cats,
And turned them into reasoning,
Sunny democrats.

They caught a nation eager,
They caught a nation young,
They taught the nation fairness,
Thrift, and the golden tongue.

They started at the bottom
And built up strong and sweet,
They shaped our minds and morals
With switches on the seat!

THE MISSISSIPPI

from *Huckleberry Finn*

Mark Twain

★

It was a monstrous big river down there—sometimes a mile and half wide; we run nights, and laid up and hid daytimes; soon as night was most gone we stopped navigating and tied up—nearly always in the dead water under a towhead; and then cut young cottonwoods and willows, and hid the raft with them. Then we set out the lines. Next we slid into the river and had a swim, so as to freshen up and cool off; then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee-deep, and watched the daylight come. Not a sound anywheres —perfectly still—just like the whole world was asleep, only sometimes the bullfrogs a-cluttering, maybe. The first thing to

see, looking away over the water, was a kind of dull line—that was the woods on t'other side; you couldn't make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness spreading around; then the river softened up away off, and warn't black any more, but gray; you could see little dark spots drifting along ever so far away—trading-scows, and such things; and long black streaks—rafts; sometimes you could hear a sweep screaking; or jumbled-up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by and by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there's a snag there in a swift current which breaks on it and makes that streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off of the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t'other side of the river, being a wood-yard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywheres; then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you from over there, so cool and fresh and sweet to smell on account of the woods and the flowers; but sometimes not that way, because they've left dead fish laying around, gars and such, and they do get pretty rank; and next you've got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it!

A little smoke couldn't be noticed now, so we would take some fish off of the lines and cook up a hot breakfast. And afterwards we would watch the lonesomeness of the river, and kind of lazy along, and by and by lazy off to sleep. Wake up by and by, and look to see what done it, and maybe see a steamboat coughing along upstream, so far off towards the other side you couldn't tell nothing about her only whether she was a stern-wheel or side-wheel; then for about an hour there wouldn't be nothing to hear nor nothing to see—just solid lonesomeness. Next you'd see a raft sliding by, away off yonder, and maybe a galoot on it chopping, because they're most always doing it on a raft; you'd see the ax flash and come

down—you don't hear nothing; you see that ax go up again, and by the time it's above the man's head then you hear the *k'chunk!*—it had took all that time to come over the water. So we would put in the day, lazying around, listening to the stillness. Once there was a thick fog, and the rafts and things that went by was beating tin pans so the steamboats wouldn't run over them. A scow or a raft went by so close we could hear them talking and cussing and laughing—heard them plain; but we couldn't see no sign of them; it made you feel crawly; it was like spirits carrying on that way in the air. Jim said he believed it was spirits; but I says:

"No; spirits wouldn't say, 'Dern the dern fog.' "

Soon as it was night out we shoved; when we got her out to about the middle we let her alone, and let her float wherever the current wanted her to; then we lit the pipes, and dangled our legs in the water, and talked about all kinds of things—we was always naked, day and night, whenever the mosquitoes would let us—the new clothes Buck's folks made for me was too good to be comfortable, and besides I didn't go much on clothes, nohow.

Sometimes we'd have that whole river all to ourselves for the longest time. Yonder was the banks and the islands, across the water; and maybe a spark—which was a candle in a cabin window; and sometimes on the water you could see a spark or two—on a raft or a scow, you know; and maybe you could hear a fiddle or a song coming over from one of them crafts. It's lovely to live on a raft. We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened. Jim he allowed they was made, but I allowed they happened; I judged it would have took too long to *make* so many. Jim said the moon could 'a' *laid* them; well, that looked kind of reasonable, so I didn't say nothing against it, because I've seen a frog lay most as many, so of course it could be done. We used to watch the stars that fell, too, and

see them streak down. Jim allowed they'd got spoiled and was hove out of the nest.

Once or twice of a night we would see a steamboat slipping along in the dark, and now and then she would belch a whole world of sparks up out of her chimbleys, and they would rain down in the river and look awful pretty; then she would turn a corner and her lights would wink out and her powwow shut off and leave the river still again; and by and by her waves would get to us, a long time after she was gone, and joggle the raft a bit, and after that you wouldn't hear nothing for you couldn't tell how long, except maybe frogs or something.

After midnight the people on shore went to bed, and then for two or three hours the shores was black—no more sparks in the cabin windows. These sparks was our clock—the first one that showed again meant morning was coming, so we hunted a place to hide and tie up right away.

LIFE IN A COUNTRY SCHOOL

Jane Seward

★

The older children went to town to school, and the younger ones attended the one-room district school which stood on the top of a hill in sight of most of the houses which supplied it. . . .

There were rarely more than fifteen pupils attending the school at any one time. We had a different teacher every year, and I do not remember any who had attended high school. Our school was the only one in our part of the State which still used the furniture made by the local carpenter. It was pine which carved easily with a jackknife, and it was painted

a dull blue-gray. The desks on both sides of the center aisle were double, while those on the sides of the room were single and were built directly against the board siding. The teacher's desk stood on a low platform, flanked on one side by an ancient version of the unabridged dictionary, and on the other by a globe. . . .

The teacher never complained about the janitor service, for she herself was the janitor. She swept the room as often as she saw fit, and on cold mornings she came early to build the fire. The room was more or less heated by a large stove which stood in the center of the building. On very cold days the seats along the sides of the room were too cold to use, and the boys brought in planks from the coal-bin and placed them near the stove, one end propped on the nearest bench and the other on an upturned water pail or coal-scuttle. Four or five children would sit on each plank near the comforting warmth of the stove. This arrangement had the added attraction of being easily upset, thus making it possible to introduce a bit of entertainment into an otherwise dull session.

The pupils used whatever textbooks were to be found around the house when school started in September. Textbooks usually descended from the elder to the younger children of the family. Frequently, there was only one book of a kind in the school. In reciting, the pupil usually stood facing the teacher, his book in his hand. . . .

I do not remember any teaching. When we had finished reciting Lesson Thirty-two, we went on to Lesson Thirty-three, which we apparently learned by spontaneous combustion, if we did not already know it from hearing it recited again and again by the older children.

I never learned either the addition or the multiplication tables until I had grown up and needed to use them. All the way through school I added columns of figures by making little dots and counting them. . . .

In reading we progressed at the rate of a set lesson a day, no matter what our abilities were. At home I was enjoying Mark Twain's *A Tramp Abroad,* while I was officially in the second reader in school.

The most entertaining study was grammar. We used the Reed and Kellog textbooks. The headings of the lessons were decorated with ornaments which simulated the twigs of a tree, with outstanding knots. We learned an elaborate system of diagramming, beginning with "The gorilla lives in Africa," and increasing in complexity to sentences which covered all of one side of the slate and ran over to the other side.

By way of variety, there were occasional pages of *Errors to be Corrected,* which offered such diverting statements as, "I saw a man digging a well with a Roman nose," and, "Then the Moor, seizing a bolster, filled with rage and jealousy, smothers her."

Day after day we diagrammed and parsed. In my later reading I am still discovering the sources of those simple, complex and compound sentences. They sampled the whole range of literature and philosophy. . . .

The teacher had few serious disciplinary problems to settle, for children were generally taught obedience at home, and the parents usually upheld the teacher in requiring good behavior. The parents' point of view was frequently expressed by the statement, "My boy knows that if he gets a lickin' at school, he gets another one when he comes home." . . .

School raised no enthusiasm, nor did we particularly object to it. Everybody from our side of the district came and went together. We carried our lunches in covered tin lard pails. They were considered standard equipment, and any child who carried a "boughten" lunch kit was thought to be "stuck up"—a terrible accusation. The gang had no mercy on the individual who was different, especially if the difference hinted of superiority.

The writing period came directly after the noon recess and

in warm weather the copy-books were hard to keep neat. The pages of these books were elaborately ruled. Different letters were supposed to rise to different heights above the main line. We copied "Diligence is the mother of good luck" all the way from the top of the page to the bottom. We brought bottles of ink from home and accidents occurred frequently. After a perspiring half hour of writing with pen and ink in the copy-book, we thankfully put away the ink bottle, with whatever ink remained unspilled, and wrote for the rest of the day on our slates. . . .

Once or twice a day two pupils went for water to a house near the school. This was a privilege very much desired, for it gave the two pupils an opportunity to be out in the open during school hours. The pail of water was carried on a stick between the two carriers. When the outdoors was very alluring, it was possible to spill the water just before delivering it, making it necessary to go back for more. This device raised suspicion and had to be used sparingly.

Safely inside the school room, the water pail was placed on a vacant desk, where the tin dipper hung on a nail beside it. Everybody drank from the same dipper without any questioning, the only rule being that any water remaining in the dipper must be thrown out the window.

THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE

James Whitcomb Riley

★

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! whare the crick so still and deep
Looked like a baby-river that was laying half asleep,
And the gurgle of the worter round the drift jest below
Sounded like the laugh of something we onc't ust to know

Before we could remember anything but the eyes
Of the angels lookin' out as we left Paradise;
But the merry days of youth is beyond our controle,
And it's hard to part ferever with the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the happy days of yore,
When I ust to lean above it on the old sickamore,
Oh! it showed me a face in its warm sunny tide
That gazed back at me so gay and glorified,
It made me love myself, as I leaped to caress
My shadder smilin' up at me with sich tenderness.
But them days is past and gone, and old Time's tuck his toll
From the old man come back to the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the long, lazy days
When the humdrum of school made so many run-a-ways,
How pleasant was the jurney down the old dusty lane,
Whare the tracks of our bare feet was all printed so plane
You could tell by the dent of the heel and the sole
They was lots o' fun on hand at the old swimmin'-hole.
But the lost joys is past! Let your tears in sorrow roll
Like the rain that ust to dapple up the old swimmin'-hole.

Thare the bulrushes growed, and the cattails so tall,
And the sunshine and shadder fell over it all;
And it mottled the worter with amber and gold
Tel the glad lilies rocked in the ripples that rolled;
And the snake-feeder's four gauzy wings fluttered by
Like the ghost of a daisy dropped out of the sky,
Or a wounded apple-blossom in the breeze's controle
As it cut acrost some orchard to'rds the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! When I last saw the place,
The scenes was all changed, like the change in my face;
The bridge of the railroad now crosses the spot

Whare the old divin'-log lays sunk and fergot.
And I stray down the banks whare the trees ust to be—
But never again will theyr shade shelter me!
And I wish in my sorrow I could strip to the soul,
And dive off in my grave like the old swimmin'-hole.

SUGARING

from *Coming Up the Road*

Irving Bacheller

★

I think that the most joyful time between summers was the coming of spring. The mild south wind had in its wings the fragrance of the great snow-filled forest. The snow was melting. The sugar season had come. The great iron kettle was scrubbed with soap and hot water and fastened with an iron chain to its lug-pole, and lifted a little above the ground. It was filled from the well and a fire built beneath it. The cedar spouts and buckets were brought down from the loft above the shed and scalded in the hot water and drained and dried.

Next morning, I went with the older boys on the sleds, loaded with spouts and buckets. Down through the melting snows we chose our way to the sugar bush. I helped to carry the buckets, wading in the deep wet snow. Each man had his kit of tools—ax, augur, bit, mallet, hammer and nails. At a point breast-high on the tree, he hewed away the rough surface of the bark. That done, he bored a hole in the tree-trunk an inch or more deep, slanting downward. With his mallet he drove the cedar spout into the hole. A nail was driven beneath the spout. The bucket was hung on the nail and the sap began dripping. It sounded on the cedar bottom like the steady beating of a drum. If I were near, I loved to reach up

and catch the sweet sap in the hollow of my hand and taste it. Many were busy with this task until hundreds of buckets were catching the drip of the thawed maples.

Meanwhile, the sugar shanty was repaired. Next day the woods rang with our voices as we gathered the sap with milk cans on a jumper drawn by one horse or a yoke of steers laboring through the deep snow. The men went to hillsides and remote dingles with pails and neck-yokes bringing the sap to the jumper. It was hard, slow work when the buckets were overflowing. . . .

It was a great privilege to be allowed to go with the boys after supper down into the woods to the sugar shanty where a man spent every night boiling the sap. We lay on the buffalo robes under the shanty-roof with the warm flames circling around the kettle before us and making a deep lighted cavern in the darkness. There I heard stories of bears and panthers and the deadly lynx. Uncle Miner would show us how a lynx walked and imitate the cry of a panther. Suddenly I would hear the cry from behind a tree, a little way back in the gloomy wood whither Orwell and one of my older brothers would have gone unobserved. Then my heart would be beating fast although I knew it was play. My fear was half pretense for I loved the illusion.

As the sap boiled up, Uncle Miner would throw off the foam with a long-handled skimmer and keep the big pot from boiling over with a ladle. When the mass had cooled a bit, he would rub the inside of the kettle with a piece of fat pork to prevent burning when the syrup boiled up again. . . .

Next day I would be in the woods again with the sap haulers and sitting in the shanty before the fire where I ate my cold luncheon with the others like a man. It was a sorrow to me that I could have but one evening in the bush for I loved the crackle of the fire and the smell of the smoke and the talk of the men.

When some hundreds of buckets of sap had been boiled,

the great kettle was cooled down. Then two or three pails of syrup would be dipped from its bottom into a milk can and hauled to the house to be sugared off in the big brass kettle on the stove. It was purged with much skimming and ladled with care to prevent boiling over. We boys were wont to watch this process with deep interest having brought a pan of clean snow and put it on the table. When the syrup dripped from the dipper in thick brown flakes we brought our saucers, which were filled at the stove-side, and began to spoon our portions on the pan of snow. The hot sugar immediately turned into thick hard wax. The sweetness and the maple flavor of it was one of our great joys. No revel of my childhood was so intemperate. It is a sticky memory, and our pleasure—like most of those we know—had its contrast of pain. We lived much in the open air through the sugar season which helped in its problem of assimilation. But our chief enemy was sugar. The siege of Sweetness continued with buckwheat cakes and syrup every morning. The idle Sundays gave our enemy his chance to undermine our good health and soon one or more of us would go to bed with the great affliction of the northern Yankees—headache.

Some of the sugar was poured into greased tins to cake. Most of it went to the cellar where it fell into the big sugar tub. Before the season ended the latter was filled to its top with some five hundred pounds of this product of the maple forest—a mass so solid that one needed an ax or a chisel to help him fill a bowl.

Somewhere in the neighborhood, before the season ended, there would be a sugar party and dance.

THE OLD SEWING ROOM

Ida M. Tarbell

★

To the average family of the 'seventies and 'eighties the sewing room was second only to the kitchen in importance. My Mother, my Sister and myself bought nothing ready-made except our hoop skirts and corsets, stockings and shoes, and an occasional coat. We were clothed from the skin out in the sewing room.

Sewing activities were continual, but the big moment came every Spring and Fall, when a real dressmaker arrived to produce the "best" or Sunday dress which each of us was to have for the coming season. Days were spent choosing the material from the dry goods store's large assortment of wools and silks, poplins and alpacas for winter—of delaines and organdies, lawns and calicoes for summer. Again and again we looked them over, considered price and, above all, quality—for quality, in my Mother's code, was moral.

Before the dressmaker arrived the sewing room must be ready. Scissors had been sharpened, patterns prayerfully selected, and innumerable bobbins wound for the double thread Grover and Baker machine which had been overhauled and oiled. On hand was an extraordinary collection of linings, whale bones, braids, spools of thread, hooks and eyes of several sizes, packages of pins and needles. Sewing tables, lap boards and scrap baskets must be ready and the coming autocrat's favorite chair in the place she wanted it. . . .

For a fortnight the dressmaker was the center of the household. A cup of coffee was sent up to her as soon as she arrived in the morning. She shared our noon dinner, and Mother saw to it that her favorite dishes were served. At four o'clock

both Mother and the dressmaker had a cup of tea to help them through the last terrible hour when their cheeks were flushed and their tempers a bit ragged.

The basic dressmaking processes were methodical—the cutting, basting and trying on. But the trimming was exciting; you had a wide choice of bands or ruffles; you could have fringes, bugles, passementeries. The buttons, in an endless variety of sizes and shapes, contributed not only to our adornment but to one of the favorite collecting hobbies of the young—the button string. I had buttons from all the family past, and from friends, and I knew the history of every button. I would give a great deal today for my old button string.

After each day's work came the operation called "cleaning up the litter." This was serious business, for everything must be saved. The big pieces were carefully put away for future repairing and remaking. The scraps went into Mother's piece bag to be used on the crazy quilt Mother always had under way. I have now a treasured crazy quilt from which I could write a fairly complete history of the gowns which came out of our sewing room over a period of twenty-five years.

Besides these seasonal campaigns a steady production of undergarments went on. In the 'seventies I was wearing high neck, long sleeve, wool combination suits; home-made because Mother did not think those beginning to come from the factory fitted properly. Over these were worn cotton drawers buttoned around the waist—"panties" we called them—and a high-necked chemise. Our best undergarments received the same care as our best gown. Mother would never permit imitation lace or machine embroidery. She hated imitations as she hated lies. She herself knit beautiful lace, hemmed and tucked ruffles—miles of them—for the bottom of drawers and chemises. . . .

Over these underthings we wore petticoats and skirts. In winter I had a red flannel petticoat for every-day wear, and one of white flannel for Sunday. Over that, I wore a heavy, colored

petticoat. In summer we had tucked and frilled white petticoats. We wore cotton stockings in summer and heavy woolen stockings in winter, sometimes of Mother's beautiful knitting. I never heard of silk stockings in those days.

Thus we were outfitted with pain and thought and care. And for what occasions? The name "Sunday dress" suggests the most important function—going to Church. Sunday promenades up the main street in our town of Titusville, Pennsylvania, had all the features of the Fifth avenue parade in New York today. People surreptitiously looked to see how your new basque was made or your hat trimmed. When you met someone who had a gown or a hat like yours—that was a tragedy.

When occasion demanded, simple accessories turned the "best" dress into a "party" dress. My favorite device was the fichu, a very long scarf, fitted about the shoulders, brought down and crossed around the waist and tied in a big flat bow behind. I liked them long and soft and trimmed with little ruffles. . . .

What impresses me now, as I think of the way I dressed, is that I got much more fun out of it, as well as a greater feeling of dignity, than I do from my present method. The careful planning, the attention to principles, all contributed to making the sewing room respected in our domestic economy. Its two chief principles were Mother's insistence that quality was a virtue, imitation a kind of sin, and Father's contention that waste was wrong, because you robbed the poor.

When you finally discarded an old dress you gave it to somebody who needed it, after first putting it in order and pressing it. Then you watched to see how she used it. If she didn't take care of it you were not likely to give her another. You resented the lack of respect for the thing which you had so long respected.

The final act in the sewing room drama was the burning of the contents of the waste barrel into which had gone only

those old scraps of cloth that would serve no useful purpose.

On some still evening my Father would empty the barrel in the middle of his garden. I always sat on the back steps and watched the remnants of the processes which had meant so much going up in smoke. When the last particle was consumed Father would rake the ashes over his garden. Good fertilizer. "Nothing lost but the smoke," he would laugh. But even the smoke had not been lost on me. I had dreamed dreams as it went up, dreams of new dresses and less, far less substantial things. Who can say that smoke which evokes dreams is lost?

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY

John Greenleaf Whittier

★

The proudest now is but my peer,
The highest not more high;
Today, of all the weary year,
A king of men am I.
Today, alike are great and small,
The nameless and the known;
My palace is the people's hall,
The ballot-box my throne!

Who serves today upon the list
Beside the served shall stand;
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,
The gloved and dainty hand!

The rich is level with the poor,
    The weak is strong today;
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more
    Than homespun frock of gray.

Today let pomp and vain pretense
    My stubborn right abide;
I set a plain man's common sense
    Against the pedant's pride.
Today shall simple manhood try
    The strength of gold and land;
The wide world has not wealth to buy
    The power in my right hand!

While there's a grief to seek redress,
    Or balance to adjust,
Where weighs our living manhood less
    Than Mammon's vilest dust—
While there's a right to need my vote,
    A wrong to sweep away,
Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!
    A man's a man today!

AMERICAN NAMES

Stephen Vincent Benét

★

I have fallen in love with American names,
The sharp names that never get fat,
The snakeskin-titles of mining-claims,
The plumed war-bonnet of Medicine Hat,
Tucson and Deadwood and Lost Mule Flat.

Seine and Piave are silver spoons,
But the spoonbowl-metal is thin and worn,
There are English counties like hunting-tunes
Played on the keys of a postboy's horn,
But I will remember where I was born.

I will remember Carquinez Straits,
Little French Lick and Lundy's Lane,
The Yankee ships and the Yankee dates
And the bullet-towns of Calamity Jane.
I will remember Skunktown Plain.

I will fall in love with a Salem tree
And a rawhide quirt from Santa Cruz,
I will get me a bottle of Boston sea
And a blue-gum nigger to sing me blues.
I am tired of loving a foreign muse.

Rue des Martyrs and Bleeding-Heart-Yard,
Senlis, Pisa, and Blindman's Oast,
It is a magic ghost you guard.
But I am sick for a newer ghost,
Harrisburg, Spartanburg, Painted Post.

Henry and John were never so
And Henry and John were always right?
Granted, but when it was time to go
And the tea and the laurels had stood all night,
Did they never watch for Nantucket Light?

I shall not rest quiet in Montparnasse.
I shall not lie easy at Winchelsea.
You may bury my body in Sussex grass,
You may bury my tongue at Champmédy.
I shall not be there. I shall rise and pass.
Bury my heart at Wounded Knee.

THE NEW COLOSSUS

This poem appears on the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor

Emma Lazarus

★

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin-cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me—
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

"MY COUNTRY"

from *The Promised Land*

Mary Antin

★

The public school has done its best for us foreigners, and for the country, when it has made us into good Americans. I am glad to tell how the miracle was wrought in one case. You should be glad to hear of it, you born Americans, for it is the

story of the growth of your country: of the flocking of your brothers and sisters from the far ends of the earth to the flag you love; of the recruiting of your armies of workers, thinkers, and leaders. . . .

How long would you say . . . it takes to make an American? By the middle of my second year in school I had reached the sixth grade. When, after the Christmas holidays, we began to study the life of Washington, running through a summary of the Revolution, and the early days of the Republic, it seemed to me that all my reading and study had been idle until then. . . . When the teacher read to us out of a big book with many bookmarks in it, I sat rigid with attention in my little chair, my hands tightly clasped on the edge of the desk; and I painfully held my breath, to prevent sighs of disappointment escaping, as I saw the teacher skip the parts between bookmarks. When the class read, and it came my turn, my voice shook and the book trembled in my hands. I could not pronounce the name of George Washington without a pause. Never had I prayed, never had I chanted the songs of David, never had I called upon the Most Holy, in such utter reverence and worship as I repeated the simple sentences of my child's history of the patriot. I gazed with adoration at the portraits of George and Martha Washington, till I could see them with my eyes shut. . . .

As I read about the noble boy who would not tell a lie to save himself from punishment, I was for the first time truly repentant of my sins. Formerly I had fasted and prayed and made sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, but it was more than half play, in mimicry of my elders. . . . Goodness, as I had known it, was respectable, but not necessarily admirable. The people I really admired, like my Uncle Solomon, and Cousin Rachel, were those who preached the least and laughed the most. My sister Frieda was perfectly good, but she did not think the less of me because I played tricks. What I loved in my friends was not inimitable. . . . A human-being

strictly good, perfectly wise, and unfailingly valiant, all at the same time, I had never heard or dreamed of. This wonderful George Washington was as inimitable as he was irreproachable. Even if I had never, never told a lie, I could not compare myself to George Washington; for I was not brave—I was afraid to go out when snowballs whizzed—and I could never be the First President of the United States.

So I was forced to revise my own estimate of myself. But the twin of my new-born humility, paradoxical as it may seem, was a sense of dignity I had never known before. For if I found that I was a person of small consequence, I discovered at the same time that I was more nobly related than I had ever supposed. . . . This George Washington, who died long before I was born, was like a king in greatness, and he and I were Fellow Citizens. There was a great deal about Fellow Citizens in the patriotic literature we read at this time; and I knew from my father how he was a Citizen, through the process of naturalization, and how I also was a citizen, by virtue of my relation to him. Undoubtedly I was a Fellow Citizen, and George Washington was another. It thrilled me to realize what sudden greatness had fallen on me; and at the same time it sobered me, as with a sense of responsibility. I strove to conduct myself as befitted a Fellow Citizen. . . .

As I read how the patriots planned the Revolution, and the women gave their sons to die in battle, and the heroes led to victory, and the rejoicing people set up the Republic, it dawned on me gradually what was meant by *my country*. The people all desiring noble things, and striving for them together, defying their oppressors, giving their lives for each other—all this it was that made *my country*. It was not a thing that I *understood;* I could not go home and tell Frieda about it, as I told her other things I learned at school. But I knew one could say "my country" and *feel* it, as one felt "God" or "myself." My teacher, my schoolmates, . . . George Washington himself could not mean more than I

when they said "my country," after I had once felt it. For the Country was for all the Citizens, and *I was a Citizen.* And when we stood up to sing "America," I shouted the words with all my might. I was in very earnest proclaiming to the world my love for my new-found country.

On the day of the Washington celebration I recited a poem that I had composed in my enthusiasm. But "composed" is not the word. The process of putting on paper the sentiments that seethed in my soul was really very discomposing. I dug the words out of my heart, squeezed the rhymes out of my brain, forced the missing syllables out of their hiding-places in the dictionary. . . .

When I had done, I was myself impressed with the length, gravity, and nobility of my poem. My father was overcome with emotion as he read it. His hands trembled as he held the paper to the light, and the mist gathered in his eyes. My teacher, Miss Dwight, was plainly astonished at my performance. . . . When Miss Dwight asked me to read my poem to the class on the day of celebration, I readily consented. It was not in me to refuse a chance to tell my schoolmates what I thought of George Washington.

I was not a heroic figure when I stood up in front of the class to pronounce the praises of the Father of his Country. Thin, pale, and hollow, with a shadow of short black curls on my brow, and the staring look of my prominent eyes, I must have looked more frightened than imposing. . . . Heels clapped together, and hands glued to my sides, I lifted up my voice in praise of George Washington. It was not much of a voice; like my hollow cheeks, it suggested consumption. My pronunciation was faulty, my declamation flat. But I had the courage of my convictions. I was face to face with two-score Fellow Citizens in clean blouses and extra frills. I must tell them what George Washington had done for their country —for *our* country—for me.

I can laugh now at the impossible meters, the grandiose

phrases, the verbose repetitions of my poem. . . . But to the forty Fellow Citizens sitting in rows in front of me it was no laughing matter. Even the bad boys sat in attitudes of attention, hypnotized by the solemnity of my demeanor. If they got any inkling of what the hail of big words was about, it must have been through occult suggestion. I fixed their eighty eyes with my single stare, and gave it to them, stanza after stanza, with such emphasis as the lameness of the lines permitted.

He whose courage, will, amazing bravery,
Did free his land from a despot's rule,
From man's greatest evil, almost slavery,
And all that's taught in tyranny's school,
Who gave his land its liberty,
Who was he? . . .

The best of the verses were no better than these, but the children listened. They had to. Presently I gave them news, declaring that Washington

Wrote the famous Constitution . . .

This was received in respectful silence, possibly because the other Fellow Citizens were as hazy about historical facts as I was at this point. "Hurrah for Washington!" they understood, and "Three Cheers for the Red, White, and Blue!" was only to be expected on that occasion. But there ran a special note through my poem—a thought that only Israel Rubinstein or Beckie Aronovitch could have fully understood, besides myself. For I made myself the spokesman of the "luckless sons of Abraham," saying—

Then we weary Hebrew children at last found rest
In the land where reigned Freedom, and like a nest
To homeless birds your land proved to us, and therefore
Will we gratefully sing your praises evermore.

The boys and girls who had never been turned away from any door because of their father's religion sat up as if fascinated in their places. But they woke up and applauded heartily when I was done, following the example of Miss Dwight, who wore the happy face which meant that one of her pupils had done well.

CHICAGO

Carl Sandburg

★

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked, and I believe them; for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked, and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal, and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job,
here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shovelling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

PROUD NEW YORK

John Reed

★

By proud New York and its man-piled Matterhorns,
The hard blue sky overhead and the west wind blowing,
Steam-plumes waving from sun-glittering pinnacles,
And deep streets shaking to the million-river:

Manhattan, zoned with ships, the cruel
Youngest of all the world's great towns,
Thy bodice bright with many a jewel,
Imperially crowned with crowns . . .

Who that has known thee but shall burn
In exile till he come again
To do thy bitter will, O stern
Moon of the tides of men!

TALL TALES

from "The People, Yes"

Carl Sandburg

★

They have yarns
Of a skyscraper so tall they had to put hinges
On the two top stories so to let the moon go by,
Of one corn crop in Missouri when the roots
Went so deep and drew off so much water
The Mississippi riverbed that year was dry,
Of pancakes so thin they had only one side,
Of a "fog so thick we shingled the barn and six feet out on the fog,"
Of Pecos Pete straddling a cyclone in Texas and riding it to the west coast where "it rained out under him,"
Of the man who drove a swarm of bees across the Rocky Mountains and the Desert "and didn't lose a bee,"
Of a mountain railroad curve where the engineer in his cab can touch the caboose and spit in the conductor's eye,
Of the boy who climbed a cornstalk growing so fast he would

have starved to death if they hadn't shot biscuits up to him,

Of the old man's whiskers: "When the wind was with him his whiskers arrived a day before he did,"

Of the hen laying a square egg and cackling, "Ouch!" and of hens laying eggs with the dates printed on them,

Of the ship captain's shadow: it froze to the deck one cold winter night,

Of mutineers on that same ship put to chipping rust with rubber hammers,

Of the sheep counter who was fast and accurate: "I just count their feet and divide by four,"

Of the man so tall he must climb a ladder to shave himself,

Of the runt so teeny-weeny it takes two men and a boy to see him,

Of mosquitoes: one can kill a dog, two of them a man,

Of a cyclone that sucked cookstoves out of the kitchen, up the chimney flue, and on to the next town,

Of the same cyclone picking up wagon tracks in Nebraska and dropping them over in the Dakotas,

Of the hook-and-eye snake unlocking itself into forty pieces, each piece two inches long, then in nine seconds flat snapping itself together again,

Of the watch swallowed by the cow—when they butchered her a year later the watch was running and had the correct time,

Of horned snakes, hoop snakes, that roll themselves where they want to go, and rattlesnakes carrying bells instead of rattles on their tails,

Of the herd of cattle in California getting lost in a giant redwood tree that had hollowed out,

Of the man who killed a snake by putting its tail in its mouth so that it swallowed itself,

Of railroad trains whizzing along so fast they reach the station before the whistle,

Of pigs so thin the farmer had to tie knots in their tails to keep them from crawling through the cracks in their pens.

Of Paul Bunyan's big blue ox, Babe, measuring between the eyes forty-two ax-handles and a plug of Star tobacco exactly,

Of John Henry's hammer and the curve of its swing and his singing of it as "a rainbow 'round my shoulder."

PAUL BUNYAN,

NORTHWOODS LUMBERMAN

from *Tall Tale America*

Walter Blair

★

Paul Bunyan worked at lumbering a long time. He started lumbering back there in Maine, where he was born, in the early days of lumbering. . . .

Whenever there's any doubt about where a great man was born, any number of places are likely, through their Chambers of Commerce, to fight for the honor. . . . It was so with Paul. . . . But there is some reason for saying that he *may* have been born several places all at once, since he was large enough, even at the start, to need some scope for being born in. Mostly, though, he was born in the state of Maine.

At three weeks, baby Paul got his family into a bit of trouble by kicking around his little tootsies and knocking down something like four miles of standing timber. This was in Maine, and remembering the old saying, "As goes Maine,

so goes the nation," the government took action right away. They told Paul's family they'd have to move the little fellow somewhere or other where he'd do less damage.

With the timber Paul had kicked over, the family made Paul a cradle, which they anchored off Eastport. Everything went well until, getting playful, Paul began waving his arms and legs around, the way babies do. That started the cradle rocking, and that started a bunch of waves that larruped around and came close to drowning every town along the New England coast.

So they had to move him again—keep him some place ashore until he was a year or two old and could shift for himself and watch out about hurting people. By that time, Paul had invented fishing and hunting, modern style, and had started, so to speak, to invent logging. People had done some logging, if you could call it that, on a small scale B.P.B. (Before Paul Bunyan). But since Paul figured out all the best dodges in the business, you might say he invented it.

When Paul came along, all lumbermen did in the way of logging was chop trees down any old way and then, in a haphazard fashion, get the logs to the sawmill. Sometimes it would be so much bother and take so long to do this, that it was scarcely worth the trouble.

But Paul changed all that in short order.

At the start, for instance, the way ax-men kept their axes sharpened was most awkward. The ax-man would go up to the top of a hill, find a big stone, and start it rolling. Then he'd gallop downhill alongside the stone, holding his ax against the stone.

"That won't do," says Paul, just like that. "If the stone's bumpy, or if the hill is, you get the ax sharp, maybe, but the blade's likely to have too many scallops in it, pretty much like a washboard. Guess I'll invent a grindstone."

Which he did. And that ended that kind of trouble, and saved the men the work of running so much.

Two other inventions of Paul's were the Two-Man Saw and the Down-Cutter. . . . He hit on the scheme of getting a strip of steel long enough to reach over a quarter section, notching it and sharpening it along one side, and putting handles on each end. "Here's a Two-Man Saw I invented," Paul said, soon as he finished it up.

To work this, Paul would pull one end, several men would pull the other end, and the trees would tumble like tenpins all over the quarter section. Paul always told the men at the other side, "I don't care if you ride the saw, but for heaven's sake, don't drag your feet."

This saw, however, wasn't worth a hoot in hilly country. There, though it'd cut the trees on the hilltops right and properly, it'd take off only the tops of the trees in the valleys. This led Paul to invent the Down-Cutter—a rig like a mowing machine (which gave him the idea)—only enough bigger so it would fell a swatch of trees five hundred feet wide. So using the Two-Man Saw or the Down-Cutter, Paul felled the trees at the proper rate in any kind of country there was.

But there still was the problem of turning logging sledges around.

In logging, the men would find their trees, fell them, shave the branches off close and clear, cut the logs into the right lengths, and then roll them down to the road. Then the teamsters would come along with their little flat wooden sledges, to pull the logs down to the skidways.

It was when the teamsters came along with their sledges that the trouble came in. The road, you see, was narrow, and the trees on both sides of it made turning around impossible. So the teamsters had to twiddle their thumbs (which was awkward, with those mittens on) and wait until Paul came along, picked up the four horses and the load, and headed them in the other direction.

"We're wasting too much time this way," says Paul. "Guess I'll invent a round-turn." After he did this, turning around

without Paul's help was easy as falling off a log—easier, so far as loggers were concerned—old-timers, at any rate.

After he'd perfected processes and methods all along the line, things went smoothly everywhere they'd gone roughly before, pretty nearly half of the time. And when he'd lined up his help, both animal and human, Paul Bunyan had a set-up that couldn't help but be world famous.

Babe, the Blue Ox, was the most useful of the animals. They say he was sky-blue because of his being born in the Winter of the Blue Snow, though most of us historians think this explanation is a little silly. If this was so, we'd like to know, why'd he have a black nose and white horns? Anyhow, Babe was a big beast—forty-two ax-handles and a plug of Star tobacco between the horns—and strong in proportion.

Some ways, Babe was a bother. Supplies for a monster animal like that were naturally a problem. Every time Babe needed to be shod, they'd have to open a new iron mine on Lake Superior. Then there was the problem of feeding him. In one day, he could eat all the feed one crew could lug to camp in a whole dad-blamed leap year. Another thing about the brute that was bothersome was his sense of humor. Nothing he could think up seemed cuter to Babe than sneaking up behind a drive and drinking up the river, until the logs were as dry as a skeleton and even less likely to move. And his other playful pranks were likely to be similarly gruesome.

But all in all, Babe doubtless was more useful than he was bothersome. He could pull a down-cutter with the greatest of ease, something no single animal, or quadruple one, for that matter, could do. He could haul logs to the landing quicker than a scandal could travel—a whole section of them at a time, regardless of how big the stand of timber had been.

Or you take the way he had with crooked roads. That stretch on the St. Croix in Wisconsin showed what he could do—a road nineteen miles long as the sober crow flies, but

much longer if you had to follow it, because it jogged and jiggled around and doubled back on itself so often. When the teamsters kept twisting around until they were dizzy, and then, on top of that, kept meeting themselves on the way back, they began to get the jumping jimjams. Result was, Paul decided to hitch Babe to the end of this road and straighten her out.

Hitched onto the end of this wiggly road, which by good luck was on a level stretch, Babe scowled, put his tongue in one corner of his mouth, hunched his shoulders, and just about touched the ground with his belly. His legs were quivering like daddy longleg legs before he could get started moving. Finally, though, after he'd started going, he kept going until he'd pulled her straight. And there was enough road left over —fifty-three miles and a fraction—to do a number of useful things with, I don't recall exactly what.

MONTANA WIVES

Gwendolen Haste

★

I had to laugh,
For when she said it we were sitting by the door,
And straight down was the Fork
Twisting and turning and gleaming in the sun.
And then your eyes carried across the purple bench beyond the river
With the Beartooth Mountains fairly screaming with light and blue and snow
And fold and turn of rimrock and prairie as far as your eye could go.
And she says: "Dear Laura, sometimes I feel so sorry for you,

Shut away from everything—eating out your heart with loneliness.
When I think of my own full life I wish that I could share it.
Just pray for happier days to come, and bear it."

She goes back to Billings to her white stucco house,
And looks through net curtains at another white stucco house,
And a brick house,
And a yellow frame house,
And six trimmed poplar trees,
And little squares of shaved grass.

Oh, dear, she stared at me like I was daft.
I couldn't help it! I just laughed and laughed.

THE NEGRO'S CONTRIBUTION

James Weldon Johnson

★

Not only as folk but as individual artists the Negro in America is a creator; and as such he has exercised an influence greater than it is yet realized to be, and which is far in excess of what his numbers and status would seem to warrant.

There is one other contribution the Negro in America has made that will eventually influence national thought. I hesitate to stress it because it is so intangible. However, it is the contribution in spiritual values that he has made through the fortitude with which he has borne himself and steadily forced his way forward.

THE NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS

Langston Hughes

★

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow
of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawn was young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went
down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy bosom
turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers;
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like rivers.

THE CREATION

A Negro Sermon

James Weldon Johnson

★

And God stepped out on space,
And He looked around and said:
I'm lonely—
I'll make me a world.

And far as the eye of God could see
Darkness covered everything,
Blacker than a hundred midnights
Down in a cypress swamp.

Then God smiled,
And the light broke.
And the darkness rolled up on one side,
And the light stood shining on the other,
And God said: That's good!

Then God reached out and took the light in His hands,
And God rolled the light around in His hands
Until He made the sun;
And He set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.
And the light that was left from making the sun
God gathered it up in a shining ball
And flung it against the darkness,
Spangling the night with the moon and stars.
Then down between
The darkness and the light
He hurled the world;
And God said: That's good!

Then God himself stepped down—
And the sun was on His right hand,
And the moon was on His left;
The stars were clustered about His head,
And the earth was under His feet,
And God walked, and where He trod
His footsteps hollowed the valleys out
And bulged the mountains up.

Then He stopped and looked and saw
That the earth was hot and barren.

So God stepped over to the edge of the world
And He spat out the seven seas—
He batted His eyes, and the lightnings flashed—
He clapped His hands, and the thunders rolled—
And the waters above the earth came down,
The cooling waters came down.

Then the green grass sprouted,
And the little red flowers blossomed,
The pine tree pointed his finger to the sky,
And the oak spread out his arms,
The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground,
And the rivers ran down to the sea;
And God smiled again,
And the rainbow appeared,
And curled itself around His shoulder.

Then God raised His arm and He waved His hand
Over the sea and over the land,
And He said: Bring forth!
And quicker than God could drop His hand,
Fishes and fowls
And beasts and birds
Swam the rivers and the seas,
Roamed the forests and the woods,
And split the air with their wings.
And God said: That's good!

Then God walked around,
And God looked around
On all that He had made.
He looked at His sun,
And He looked at His moon,
And He looked at His little stars;
He looked at His world

With all its living things,
And God said: I'm lonely still.

Then God sat down—
On the side of a hill where He could think;
By a deep, wide river He sat down;
With His head in His hands,
God thought and thought,
Till He thought: I'll make me a man!

Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay;
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled Him down;
And there the great God Almighty
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,
Who rounded the earth in the middle of His hand;
This Great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Till He shaped it in His image;

Then into it He blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.
Amen. Amen.

SMITH STREET, U.S.A.

Elizabeth Hughes

★

Between the years 1912 and 1929, in the United States, in Oklahoma, in a small town named Vinita, and on a street called Smith, more than a hundred children, of whom I was one, learned to be Americans.

We were born Americans, to be sure, but we learned practical, applied Americanism on Smith Street, just as millions of other children were learning it on their own Elm or Third or Walnut Streets in thousands of small towns all over the nation. Smith Street, I believe, was in every major detail typical of American small town life. There was nothing unusual or distinctive about the block on Smith Street where I grew up—and that is its distinction.

Smith Street may not have been beautiful, and it certainly was not perfect. No doubt it had the faults of narrowness, provincialism, and ignorance so often ascribed to it in fiction. But whatever else Smith Street may have been, it was important. We didn't know it then, and perhaps few of the millions who grew up on such a street have thought about it since, but Smith Street was the most significant social phenomenon in America. To have grown up on Smith Street was to have lived in the nearest thing to a pure democracy that this country has ever seen. It was to have been as nearly unconscious of class or economic distinctions as it is possible for humankind to be.

On that block (we called it the neighborhood, and the name meant something) lived employers and employees, tradesmen, professional men, laborers, government workers, schoolteachers, clerks, city and county workers. The most well-

to-do did not live on Smith Street, but neither did the families who constantly had to be "helped." There were twenty houses on our block, and, when we moved there, I think every house was owned by the family who lived in it.

Only three houses were two stories high. The rest were one-story, generally five-room, cottages; all frame, and all painted either white or yellow. They had a front room, dining room, kitchen, and two bedrooms. The front porch was for sitting on after supper. The front yard, theoretically, was a lawn, but there were few grass lawns on Smith Street because the trees cast too much shade and the children trampled the grass down in their play faster than it could grow.

There was no nonsense about the back yard. It was for hanging out the wash and raising a vegetable garden and sometimes for keeping a cow or chickens. Nobody had a maid, though from time to time one or more families would have a hired girl, if they could afford it or if someone were sick. The hired girls ate with the family and usually shared a bed with one of the children.

The residents of Smith Street were at least third generation Americans. Probably most of them had had forefathers in the Revolution. Some were of Indian descent. All bore names of English, Scotch, Irish, or German derivation—McKay, Thaxton, Long, Reidemann, Hughes, Sherwood.

Now, after twenty years, I can call up Smith Street as it was in my childhood. I can start at the corner house at the north end of the block on the west side, go down the block, cross over, and come back on the east side, and describe every family, how they made their living, how many children they had. We knew one another that well.

Mr. Cartwright, the home-loan executive, had the highest income of any man on the block, but his wife seldom kept help. She did the work of a two-story house and cooked three meals a day for five people, quite as a matter of course.

Mrs. Rowe, the widow who clerked in a department store,

had the lowest income. Her husband died shortly before the birth of her youngest child, leaving her with five children to rear. She owned her five-room house and rented two rooms of it. I can remember hearing my mother and other neighborhood women speaking with the greatest admiration of Mrs. Rowe. She still was poor, even by our modest standards, but she had weathered the danger that her children would starve unless she was "helped," an alternative almost equally intolerable.

Between the Cartwrights and Mrs. Rowe lay a wide scale of economic situations. Almost everyone, from time to time, would have a period of financial distress and worry over debt, but we always had ample clothing and food.

My family, financially, must have been somewhere in the middle range of Smith Street. The two little girls I played with most were Peggy Cartwright and Ellen Rowe. We waded in the gutters when it rained and sewed doll clothes together and went to Sunday school together because we were within two months of the same age, and all the other little girls on the block were noticeably older or younger than we.

Before World War I there was a neighborhood club. Everyone on the block belonged to it. The women met in the afternoon at one of the houses and brought their children. There was no one to leave them with, even if anyone had thought of leaving them. Several times a year the club met at night so the husbands could come. Then it was a dinner party and each wife brought her special dish, the one no one else could make quite as well.

Everyone was solicitous to see that old Major Buford, a Civil War veteran who had been Indian agent at Muskogee, had everything he liked best. He generally had to eat in the room apart, where we children were sent with our plates. If he hadn't eaten with us we would have eaten with him. We adored the Major. He seemed to enjoy our society as much as we enjoyed his, which was a good thing, for he had in his

front yard the neighborhood's most desirable tree for climbing.

There were no formal calls of condolence on Smith Street. When there was a death in the neighborhood everyone went in. Already, if there had been need, they had helped care for the dying neighbor. After death came, they divided the night into shifts and sat up, two to a shift, while the family slept. At that time there were no funeral homes to which the dead could be sent, and in the two nights between death and burial the neighbors kept watch in the house that sheltered both the dead and the living. They came in the daytime and brought quantities of food, cakes and pies, roast meat and vegetables. They put it on the table and urged the family to eat, often staying to eat with them. The neighborhood women did the housework. Everyone came, even though they were not close friends.

The unformulated principle was that a woman's place was where she was needed most. If she had small children she stayed at home and took care of them. If she had no children, or her children were in school, and she could be useful working with her husband, she went to town and worked with him. The druggist and his wife and the jeweler and his wife, neither of whom had children, always worked together in the stores. My mother, after I was in school, went more and more often to the photograph studio with my father.

Artificial class distinctions had no meaning to us. When they were brought to our attention by people from larger cities we thought they were funny. I still remember my father's roars of laughter at the remark of a visitor to Smith Street. She had accompanied her hosts to one of the evening parties of the neighborhood club and had recognized immediately the great personal charm of Mr. Prentice, one of the most popular men on the block.

We left the party just after the visiting lady and her hosts and walked down the street not far behind them.

"Mr. Prentice is a delightful man," the visitor remarked. "What does he do?"

"He's a barber," said her resident relative.

"A barber! A barber! Do you know a barber?"

"Well, of course we know a barber," her host snorted. "He lives only two doors from us."

"But socially! He's charming—but I certainly never expected to meet a barber."

My father reached home without bursting, but it was a near thing. For days afterward he was apt to say, "A barber! A barber!" and go off into shouts of mirth.

I would not have you think that Smith Street was Utopia. There were clashes. A coolness would arise between two families occasionally. Politics (which meant Democrat or Republican and nothing else) were often argued with more heat than tolerance. Our moral code was strict, and if the suspicion arose, which happened rarely, that one of the girls on the block had violated it, we gossiped our heads off.

The gossip was exciting and stimulating, even enjoyable. But underneath it lay a genuine kindliness, and we expressed it by action that was eminently practical. The girl was not shunned or ostracized. Girls her own age may have been quietly instructed by their mothers to see less of her, but that was the limit to overt action. We pretended to her parents that we had heard nothing, with a determination which possibly defeated its purpose. When she married, as in the course of time she always did, we not only treated the whole thing as water under the bridge but persuaded ourselves that there probably was never anything to the talk in the first place.

To me, and I suspect to most of the men and women who grew up on Smith Street, the present bitter arguments of the radicals on both right and left sound silly. We know all about a classless society: we lived in one.

We never thought that Mr. Cartwright was necessarily a

superior person because he made more money than Mrs. Rowe. They were members of the same church. Their children played together. Mrs. Rowe would have been shocked at the thought of hating Mr. Cartwright because he was a capitalist. He would have been equally shocked at the thought of fearing or distrusting Mrs. Rowe because she belonged to the masses. In fact, he would have been shocked at the suggestion that Mrs. Rowe did belong to the masses. He would have suspected that the observation implied some reflection on Mrs. Rowe, whom he knew well and held in the highest respect.

The children who grew up on Smith Street are not likely to be very sympathetic toward an ideology that would prevent them from talking freely about anything and anybody they want to. They will not take readily, either, to any system that commands them to regard henceforth as enemies the same kind of people who were their friends and neighbors through the formative years.

It has been ten years since I quit the physical environs of Smith Street. Time enough, one would think, for me to lose the idea that life on Smith Street was reality and life among the class conscious an illusion. Yet to this day I am incapable of making distinctions based on wealth or position. They do not exist for me. After a childhood spent on Smith Street people are either individuals of good character and agreeable disposition, hence persons to be admired, or they are not, and are hence persons to be avoided.

We hundred and more men and women who were children together no longer live, geographically, on Smith Street. The millions of others have gone from their Elm or Third or Walnut Streets. But Smith Street has not left us. It never will.

There is good reason to believe that those who worry over American democracy simply do not know about Smith Street. They can't have forgotten it, so they must never have lived

there. If the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, the battle for the preservation of American democracy was won on Smith Street, or it is already lost.

SKYSCRAPER

from *America at War*

Joseph Husband

★

The old brick building had vanished before the wreckers in a cloud of broken brick and plaster. From my window I could look down into the cavity which had held it. Already the muddy floor was dotted with the toadstool tents of the excavators, and day and night, unceasingly, wagonloads of sticky clay and mud dragged up the incline to the street. Far down in the stifling air of the caissons, the concrete roots were being planted, tied with cement and steel to the very core of the world.

The foundations were finished and the first thin steel columns stretched upward. In a day they multiplied. A hundred black shoots pierced the soil; a hundred sprouting shoots, in even rows, like a well-planted garden. In ordered plan the crossbeams fell into their places, and the great lattice of the substructure shaped itself. Then, above the uproar and vibration of the street, rose the angry clatter of the pneumatic riveters, steel against steel in a shattering reverberation.

With incredible rapidity the gaunt frame piled upward. On the topmost story the derricks crouched like giant spiders, thin legs firmly braced against post and I-beam, casting their threads of steel softly to the distant street to take a dozen tons of girders in their grasp and lift them, gently turning, to

the top. Against the pale sky the black ribs of the building surged higher. As through prison bars I saw the distant blue of the harbor; the familiar view had vanished; a miracle had transformed it. Untiring, hour after hour, the derricks lifted bales of steel to swing into their destined place; and, as each new story was bolted down, the derricks lifted themselves heavily to the new level, clean cut against the sky, above the highest towers of the city.

Like beetles, the steelworkers clambered surefooted over the empty frame. Far out on the end of narrow beams they hung above the void; on the tops of slender columns they clung, waiting to swing into place a ton of steel. Braced against nothing but empty space, they pounded red-hot rivets with their clattering hammers; like flies, they caught the slim-spun threads of the derricks and swung up to some inaccessible height. On flimsy platforms, the glow of their forges blinked red in the twilight.

I am thinking also of other workers: of men who measured this tall tower on their slide rules, of grimy workers who followed their mystic blueprints and made each piece with such fine precision that the great masses of steel fell softly into their final place with hair-breadth accuracy, rivet hole to rivet hole, and tongue in groove. Engineers, who foresaw each bolt and fitted so perfectly mass on mass with only imagination and their books of figures to guide them; workers in the steel mills of the distant city who molded each beam and pillar to go together like a watch—theirs is the silent forgotten labor!

Day faded in fog and darkness. Black-blurred, the fame of the skyscraper rose in the gray of the mist and the shadow of the night. Through the tangle of its skeleton frame, the flaming red and yellow of an electric sign spattered a trail of jeweled fire against the sky. Another, with a flash of myriad color, shone and was gone. Far down in the streets, the glare of automobile lights stroked the gleaming blackness of the pavement. From surrounding buildings the glitter of countless

windows shone brightly through the mist. But high above the firefly activity of the city, the black frame of the skyscraper touched the starless sky. Like beacon fires, the forges of the workers glowed intermittently, panting breaths of red, half smothered in the approaching night. In graceful curves, like tiny comets, the heated rivets, tossed from forge to the waiting bucket of the riveter, gleamed yellow and vanished. I thought of Whistler's nocturnes; of the fireworks at Cremorne.

I stood on the rough staging of the top floor of the tower. Above, the light steel ribs of the dome met in a heavy rosette from which a flagpole pointed to the drifting clouds. Standing on its base, a man was arranging the tackle which would lift him up the slender mast, to paint it, or gild the ball at its tip. He saw me and leaned down.

"Come up," he shouted.

I climbed the ladder and, with his arm to steady me, crawled out above the dome. There was room for my feet beside his. I heard him laughing beside me.

"Don't break off that pole, I've got to climb it."

I looked down. The curving ribs of the dome ended in a shallow cornice twenty feet below. That was all. Far down, the roofs of neighboring buildings lay flat and small in the sunlight. Like the great black matrix for a printed page, the roofs and streets extended to the harbor and the hills; like column rules, the shallow grooves of avenues cut sharply the solid lines of the side streets. Here and there were the open spaces of public squares; far off, the green sweep of a city park. And everywhere above the roofs, wisps of steam and smoke lay softly on the breeze. Like crooked fingers, the wharves caught the edge of the harbor; the water was a quivering green, dotted with toy boats that crossed and recrossed like water insects, leaving a churn of white behind them and a smear of smoke above.

Straight down in the street the cars crawled jerkily in two thin lines, the beetle-backed roofs inch-long in the distance.

And everywhere were the moving dots of people, swarming upon the pavement.

It was very still. Far below, the noises of the street, the living cry of the city, rose like the murmur of a river in a deep cañon. Beside me, the steeple jack leaned easily against the mast, his eyes watching the distant glimmer of the sea. I looked up, and the slowly moving clouds seemed suddenly to stand still, the tower took the motion, and racing across the sky, the flagpole seemed bending to the earth.

Down in the street I joined the crowd on the sidewalk, necks bent back to watch a tiny speck at the top of the thin shaft of the flagpole.

"Pretty high up," said someone.

"Yes," answered another, "but they're putting in the foundation for a higher one on the corner."

AMERICA FROM A TRAIN WINDOW

from *God's Country and Mine*

Jacques Barzun

★

The way to see America is from a lower berth about two in the morning. You've just left a station—it was the jerk of pulling out that woke you—and you raise the curtain a bit between thumb and forefinger to look out. You are in the middle of Kansas or Arizona, in the middle of the space where the freight cars spend the night and the men drink coffee out of cans. Then comes the signal tower, some bushes, a few shacks, and—nothing. You see the last blue switch-light on the next track, and beyond it is America—dark and grassy, or sandy and rocky—and no one there. Nothing but the irrational universe with you in the center trying to reason

it out. It's only ten, fifteen minutes since you've left a thriving town, but life has already been swallowed up in that ocean of matter which is and will remain as wild as it was made.

Come daylight, the fear vanishes, but not the awe or the secret pleasure.

THE MIRACLE OF AMERICA

Herbert Hoover

★

During the last score of years our American form of civilization has been deluged with criticism. It comes from our own people who deplore our undoubted faults and genuinely wish to remedy them. It comes from our political parties by their denunciation in debate of our current issues. It arises from the forthright refusal of the American people to wash their dirty linen in secret. It comes from our love of sensational incidents where villainy is pursued by law, and virtue triumphs. It comes from intellectuals who believe in the American system but who feel that our moral and spiritual greatness has not risen to the level of our industrial accomplishments. . . .

Perhaps the time has come for Americans to take a little stock and think something good about themselves.

We could point out that our American system has perfected the greatest productivity of any nation on earth; that our standard of living is the highest in the world. We could point to our constantly improving physical health and lengthening span of life. We could mention the physical condition of our youth as indicated somewhat by our showing in the recent Olympic games.

In the government field, we could suggest that our supposedly decadent people still rely upon the miracle of the ballot and the legislative hall to settle their differences of view and not upon a secret police with slave camps.

In the cultural field, we could point out that with only about six percent of the world's population we have more youth in high schools and institutions of higher learning, more musical and literary organizations, more libraries and probably more distribution of the printed and spoken word than all the other ninety-four percent put together.

On the moral and spiritual side, we have more hospitals and charitable institutions than all of them. And we could suggest that we alone, of all nations, fought in two world wars and asked no indemnities, no acquisition of territory, no domination over other nations. We could point to an advancement of the spirit of Christian compassion such as the world has never seen, and prove it by the tons of food and clothes and billions of dollars we have made as gifts in saving hundreds of millions from famine and governments from collapse.

Much as I feel deeply the lag in spots which do not give chance to our Negro population, yet I cannot refrain from saying that our 12 million Negroes probably own more automobiles than all the 200 million Russians or the 300 million Negroes under European governments in Africa.

All of which is not boasting, but just a fact. And we could say a good deal more. . . .

The meaning of our word *America* flows from one pure source. Within the soul of America is the freedom of mind and spirit in man. Here alone are the open windows through which pours the sunlight of the human spirit. Here alone human dignity is not a dream but a major accomplishment.

At the time our ancestors were proclaiming that the Creator had endowed all mankind with rights of freedom as the children of God, with free will, the German philosophers, Hegel and others, and later Karl Marx, were proclaiming a

satanic philosophy of agnosticism and that the rights of man came from the state. The greatness of America today comes from one philosophy, the despair of Europe from the other.

But there are people in our country today who would compromise in these fundamental concepts. They scoff at these tested qualities in men. They never have understood and never will understand what the word *America* means. They explain that these qualities were good while there was a continent to conquer and a nation to build. They say that time has passed. No doubt the land frontier has passed. But the frontiers of science and better understanding of human welfare are barely opening.

This new land of science with all its high promise cannot and will not be conquered except by men and women inspired by these same concepts of free spirit and free mind.

And it is those moral and spiritual qualities which rise alone in free men which will fulfill the meaning of the word *American.* And with them will come centuries of further greatness to our country.

THE POWER OF AMERICA

from *U.S. 40*

George R. Stewart

★

A transcontinental journey over U.S. 40—or over any other coast-to-coast road—should be, for any thinking person, a somewhat sobering experience. He has traversed more than one-eighth of the circumference of the globe, the whole breadth of a nation and one of the earth's two great landmasses. . . .

No observant man can well complete the run . . . without

. . . the sense of power. There are indeed long stretches of desert and mountain and scrubby woods, but by and large the productivity of a nation that is at the same time almost a continent becomes gradually overpowering, as one looks at it along both sides of the highway. The people of the United States have been granted a natural heritage such as perhaps no other people have ever been granted, and they have exploited it materially. Mile after mile, hundred-mile after hundred-mile, stretch the farmlands, interspersed with mines and oil-fields, dotted with towns and great cities full of manufacturing plants. A jingo imperialist would be justified in feeling drunk with power.

One may indeed ask, "Is not this heritage at its full peak of production, ready to decline? Has not the soil been depleted of its riches? Are not the oil-fields and the mines now at their peak, ready to decline?" It may be. One passes gullied and eroded hillsides. There is a surprising amount of land that was once farmed, and is now going back to forest, depleted. There are abandoned mines, and oil-fields where the pumps are no longer going.

Yet on the whole the argument would seem to work in the other direction. The wastage itself, though appalling, is indicative of a kind of greatness. Only a supremely prosperous people could afford to waste so much—to let land revert to unproductiveness, to be careless of erosion, not even to practice forestry.

Take, for example, one small item. On both sides of the pavement along most of the course of U.S. 40 grass grows profusely. In almost any other country there would be some provision by which this grass could be fed to animals. Either they would be tethered there and allowed to graze, or the grass would be cut. Along U.S. 40 these countless potential bales of hay are nearly all allowed to go to waste.

If—say about the year 1937—one Adolph Hitler could have been spirited away and taken upon a tour across U.S. 40, what

might have been the effect upon the history of the world? Would he ever have let himself become embroiled in a war into which the United States was in the long run almost certainly to be drawn? Did Hitler . . . have any real idea of the power of the United States? Such a conception can hardly come from reading figures in books. It comes, in an entirely different way, when one drives at the speed of the modern automobile, day after day, through highly populous and amazingly productive country. . . .

"I AM AN AMERICAN"

R. L. Duffus

★

I am an American. The things I shall say about myself may seem at first to contradict one another, but in the end they add up. I am almost always recognized at once, wherever I go about the world. Some say it is my clothes that give me away. Some say it is my way of talking. I think it is more than that.

I have had an unusual history. My ancestors came over in the *Mayflower*. They also came over during the hungry Forties of the last century, in the hopeful Eighties, in the troubled Nineties. Or I came five years ago and have just become a citizen. Name any race—I belong to it.

I have been around. I have seen the earth. No plain, no river, no mountain, no ocean, no race is alien to me, but now *I am an American. I am an American* because my father, or his father, or some other one of my ancestors grew tired of being ordered about by persons no better or wiser than himself; or had more ambition or more energy than there was room for in the place where he was born; or was eager for new experience, or was hungry for land.

I, or someone for me, bought my share of America at a price. I have known hardships, sickness, and danger.

I could not be held within the limits set for me by kings and lordlings on the other side of the water. I pushed forward. I hunted far beyond the mountains. I returned and took my wife and our brood and our wagons over. I crossed the great river and the little rivers. I crossed the ocean of plains. I crossed the deserts and the further ranges.

The life I lived shaped me into a new kind of human being. I will not say a better kind, only a different kind.

I have not loved arrogant authority. I have not respected any man because of the accident of birth. I have judged my fellows by what they were and what they did. I have relied upon myself. I have hoped greatly.

Out of the hate for power not answerable to the people, out of the bravest words and the boldest acts of my ancestors in other lands, out of the necessities of a new and untamed world, out of the knowledge learned by pioneers, that no man lives to himself alone; out of the desire for freedom, for peace and moderation, I have tried to create my government. I have not been wholly successful. I hope to be. I shall be.

In my struggle with this continent, out of my dreams, out of my grief, out of my sins, I have laid by a great store of memories. They are a part of what I am. No torrent of words can tell of them. Some of them are too deeply hidden for words. But no new world, no new order in the world, can wipe them out.

I remember great men and great deeds. I remember great sayings.

But I remember, also, sayings that were never written down and deeds known only to a few: the pioneer greeting his wife as he came in from his new cornfield, in the dappled shade of ringed and dying trees; the strong surge of discussion in remote crossroads stores; the young man in Georgia or Ohio kissing his mother good-by as he goes to enlist; a Mississippi

Negro, a Texas cowboy, a roundhouse wiper making a song; a small-town William Tell standing up to a petty tyrant; all manner of men and women planning, working, saving, seeing that the children had better schooling than the parents; reformers crying out against brutality and corruption; dreamers battling against the full tide of materialism.

I remember all these things. They help to steady me when I lie awake at night, or when I walk the streets or go about the countryside in the darker night of injustice and violence that has come over the earth.

I stand up straighter. These are my people that have said and done these things.

I am an American. I am of one race and of all races. I am heir to a great estate. I am free and bound to the wheel of a great responsibility.

I turn. I look back across the oceans. Are they not my people, too, all of them?

Have we come so far, done so much, suffered so much, hoped so much—and does it mean nothing? Is this New World to become an Old World? Were the brave words and the braver deeds in vain? Shall men stand straight and proud, manful and just, courageous and tender, building and sharing, on but one continent and for but a little time?

I am an American. I say, "No!"

On this continent, in God's good time, was brought forth "a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." What was proved three centuries ago, a century and a half ago, three-quarters of a century ago, is not the less true now.

Freedom is not a lie. The brotherhood of man is not a lie. The kindly help given by neighbor to neighbor does not rest on a lie. "These truths we hold to be self-evident." Challenged, they are none the less true.

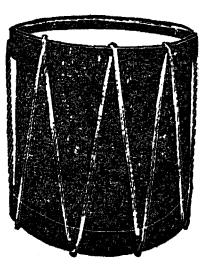
I am an American. I cannot let the challenge drop. I cannot say, "I am not as other men, and their tribulations do not

concern me." I cannot say, free—"let others be slaves for all of me."

I am an American and the inheritor of this continent. But the deed of gift was not handed to me without a codicil. There are stipulations and conditions. What was won by courage must be kept by courage. What was won in pain will have to be defended in pain. What was achieved cannot be enjoyed without new achievement.

I cannot rest upon my memories. I shall make new and proud memories for my children. I shall say to tyrants, as they said, "Stand aside!" Over vast prairies, beyond loftier mountains than my pioneer fathers crossed, I see a new vision: all who struggle anywhere for liberty are my countrymen, and no spot where blood has been shed for conscience' sake is foreign ground to me.

After the years, the centuries, I begin to know what it means to be an American.



VI

Land of Promise

For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead—nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826)

★

First there was the land. Then there were the people. And always there was the promise and the idea of liberty.

Americans have written and talked about the promise of their country and their ideas of liberty and freedom since the beginning. God willing, they will never stop.

The largest possible book would be too small a book to contain all that you should read and know about what Americans have said about the promise of their country. What follows here was said by Presidents and poets, judges and journalists, but it is only a small segment of the whole. They may not have agreed with each other, just as today you and I may not agree in our ideas of what America is and what it should be.

The important thing is that I am free to tell you and you are free to listen or not, as you choose—and you are free to tell me and I to listen. And that is the essence of freedom.

★ ★ ★

AMERICA WAS PROMISES

Archibald MacLeish

★

America was promises—to whom?

Jefferson knew:
Declared it before God and before history:
Declares it still in the remembering tomb.
The promises were Man's: the land was his—
Man endowed by his Creator:
Earnest in love; perfectible by reason:
Just and perceiving justice: his natural nature
Clear and sweet at the source as springs in trees are.
It was Man the promises contemplated.
The times had chosen Man: no other:
Bloom on his face of every future:
Brother of stars and of all travelers:
Brother of time and of all mysteries:
Brother of grass also; of fruit trees.
It was man who had been promised; who should have.
Man was to ride from the Tidewater; over the Gap:
West and South with the water; taking the book with him:
Taking the wheat seed; corn seed; pip of apple:
Building liberty a farmyard wide;
Breeding for useful labor; for good looks;
For husbandry; humanity; for pride—
Practicing self-respect and common decency. . . .

America was promises to whom?
Old Man Adams knew. He told us—
An aristocracy of compound interest
Hereditary through the common stock!

We'd have one sure before the mare was older.
"The first want of every man was his dinner:
The second his girl." Kings were by the pocket.
Wealth made blood made wealth made blood made wealthy.
Enlightened selfishness gave lasting light.
Winners bred grandsons: losers only bred! . . .

For whom the promises? For whom the river?
"It flows west! Look at the ripple of it!"
The grass "So that it was wonderful to see
And endless without end with wind wonderful!"
The Great Lakes; landless as oceans; their beaches
Coarse sand; clean gravel; pebbles;
Their bluffs smelling of sunflowers: smelling of surf;
Of fresh water; of wild sunflowers . . . wilderness.
For whom the evening mountains on the sky;
The night wind from the west; the moon descending?

Tom Paine knew.
Tom Paine knew the People.
The promises were spoken to the People.
History was voyages toward the People.
Americas were landfalls of the People.
Stars and expectations were the signals of the People. . . .

Believe

America is promises to
Take!
America is promises to
Us
To take them
Brutally
With love but
Take them.

O believe this!

OUR FATHERS FOUGHT FOR LIBERTY

James Russell Lowell

★

Our fathers fought for liberty,
They struggled long and well,
History of their deeds can tell—
But did they leave us free?

Are we free to speak our thought,
To be happy and be poor,
Free to enter Heaven's door,
To live and labor as we ought?

Are we then made free at last
From the fear of what men say.
Free to reverence today,
Free from the slavery of the past?

Our fathers fought for liberty,
They struggled long and well,
History of their deeds can tell—
But *ourselves* must set us free.

FREEDOM

Emily Dickinson

★

Could I but ride indefinite,
As doth the meadow bee,
And visit only where I liked,
And no man visit me,

And flirt all day with buttercups,
And marry whom I may,
And dwell a little everywhere,
Or better, run away,

With no police to follow,
Or chase me if I do,
Till I should jump peninsulas
To get away from you—

I said, but just to be a bee
Upon a raft of air,
And row in nowhere all day long,
And anchor off the bar—
What liberty! So captives deem
Who tight in dungeons are.

THE POWER OF PUBLIC OPINION

from his Pueblo speech on the League of Nations, 1919

Woodrow Wilson

★

The most dangerous thing for a bad cause is to expose it to the opinion of the world. The most certain way that you can prove that a man is mistaken is by letting all his neighbors discuss what he thinks, and if he is in the wrong you will notice that he will stay at home, he will not walk on the street. He will be afraid of the eyes of his neighbors. He will be afraid of their judgment of his character. He will know that his cause is lost unless he can sustain it by the arguments of right and justice. The same law that applies to individuals applies to nations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YESTERDAY

from "Robert E. Lee," 1919

Woodrow Wilson

★

A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about.

AN INDIVISIBLE WORD

from *One World*

Wendell Willkie

★

Freedom is an indivisible word. If we want to enjoy it, and fight for it, we must be prepared to extend it to everyone, whether they are rich or poor, whether they agree with us or not, no matter what their race or the color of their skin.

THE GOOD NEIGHBOR

from his first inaugural address

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

★

In the world of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others—the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

from his Annual Message to Congress, 1941

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

★

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants —everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

from "I Am An American Day" speech

Judge Learned Hand

★

What then is the spirit of liberty? I cannot define it; I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men

and women. The spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias. The spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded. The spirit of liberty is the spirit of Him who, near two thousand years ago, taught mankind that lesson it has never learned, but has never quite forgotten; that there may be a kingdom where the least shall be heard and considered side by side with the greatest.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FREE MEN

from a speech given at a dinner of the Four Freedoms Foundation, 1953

Harry S. Truman

★

The good life is not possible without freedom. But only the people, by their will and by their dedication to freedom, can make the good life come to pass. We cannot leave it to the courts alone, because many of the invasions of these freedoms are so devious and so subtle that they cannot be brought before the courts.

The responsibility for these freedoms falls on free men. And free men can preserve them only if they are militant about freedom. We ought to get angry when these rights are violated, and make ourselves heard until the wrong is righted . . . There are times when the defense of freedom calls for vigorous action. This action may lead to trouble, and frequently does. Effective effort to preserve freedom may involve discomfort and risk. It takes faith, unselfishness, and courage to stand up to a bully; or to stand up for a whole community when it has been frightened into subjection. But it has to be done, if we are to remain free.

THE WINNING OF FREEDOM

Dwight D. Eisenhower

★

The winning of freedom is not to be compared to the winning of a game—with victory recorded forever in history. Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed—or else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die.

FREEDOM AND COURAGE

from *But We Were Born Free*

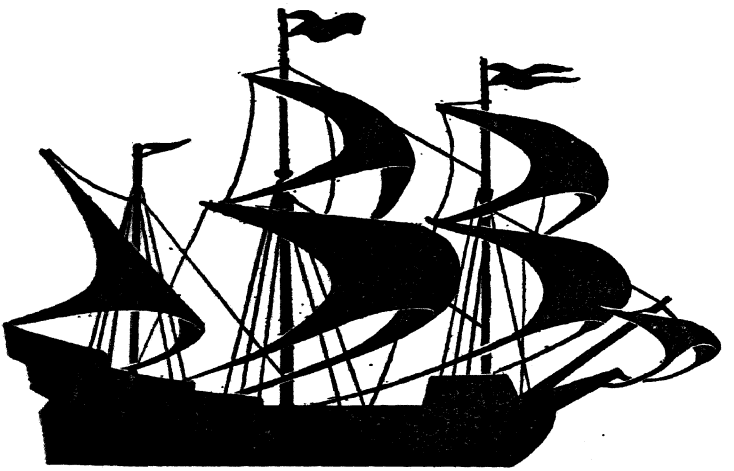
Elmer Davis

★

This nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the principle—among others—that honest men may honestly disagree; that if they all say what they think, a majority of the people will be able to distinguish truth from error; that in the competition in the market place of ideas, the sounder ideas will in the long run win out. . . .

The United States has worked; the principles of freedom on which it was founded—free thought as well as political liberty—have worked. This is the faith once delivered to the fathers—the faith for which they were willing to fight and, if necessary, die, but for which they fought and won. These men, whose heirs and beneficiaries we are, risked, and knew they were risking, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred

honor. We shall have no heirs and beneficiaries, and shall deserve to have none, if we lack the courage to preserve the heritage they won for us. . . . This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.



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